THE SAINTS SVRE AND PERPETVALL GVIDE.

OR,

A Treatiſe concerning the WORD.

Which, as the *Iſraelites* Cloud, conducts us from *Ægypt* to *Canaan*; whereunto wee muſt take heed, as unto a Light that ſhineth in a darke place, till the Day dawne, and the Day-ſtarre ariſe in our hearts.

BY

That Reverend, Learned, and Godly Miniſter of Chriſt Ieſus, ROBERT BOLTON, Bachelour of Divinitie, and late Preacher of Gods Word at *Broughton* in *Northampton-ſhire*.

IOHN 3. 20, 21.

Every one that doth evill, hateth the light, neither commeth to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.

But he that doth the truth, commeth to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God.

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THE SAINT'S SURE AND PERPETUAL GUIDE.

OR,

A Treatise concerning the Word of God,

Which is the Well's Clear Conduits

BY

[illegible]

THE SAINTS SVRE AND PERPETVALL GVIDE.

PSAL. 119. VER. 105.

Thy Word is a Lampe unto my feet, and a Light unto my paths.

OF all other parts of the holy Bible, this Booke of the *Psalmes*, (penned for the moſt part by *David*, the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael*, and a man after Gods owne heart) is ſtuft and fill'd with greateſt plentie and varietie of precious Leſſons and inſtructions unto eternall life. The choice and flower of all things profitable and comfortable for the right courſe of a Chriſtian

The Contents and the benefit of the Pſalmes in generall.

ſtian life, is therein briefely contained, and very movingly and feelingly expreſt. In them we may be acquainted with the Majeſtie and Myſteries of God, with the Sufferings of Chriſt, with unfained Repentance, unwearied Patience, ſpirituall Wiſedome, and wonderfull Courage of the godly man, and true Chriſtian. In them we may behold the terrors of Wrath, and the anguiſhes of an afflicted Conſcience, the comforts of Grace, and great Deliverances, the wonderfull workes of Providence over this World, and the promiſed Ioyes of that World which is to come. In a word, all good neceſſarily to be either knowne or done, or had, is plentifully, as out of a rich Treaſurie, reveal'd and offer'd unto us in theſe heavenly Songs of *David*.

Of the 119. in particular.

Amongſt which, this 119. *Pſalme* (a part of which I have now read unto you) is, as it were, a precious Iewell, or cleare Cryſtall; wherein wee may ſee the right temper and ſtate of true godlineſſe, and ſinceritie, the markes and properties of all true worſhippers of God, the zeale and affections of all faithfull Chriſtians, the very lively Anatomie and laying open of a good and gracious Soule.

The Diviſion of it.

This whole Pſalme doth conſiſt of 22. Parts or Portions of Staves, or Octaves, even juſt ſo many as there be Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet; and every Portion containeth in it eight Verſes; and every Verſe of every Portion, or Staffe, begins with the ſame Hebrew Letter. The which ſpeciall and extraordinarie penning and diſpoſing of the

the Pſalme, doth declare and ſet out unto us theſe three things:

Three Leſſons to be learned thence.

1 The diligent intention of mind, and carefull meditation of the Author, in the framing and compoſing of it.

2 The precious neſſe and worth of the matter contain'd in it; in that it pleaſed the Spirit of God to deliver it in choice and ſpeciall order.

3 A deſire and purpoſe, that it might more eaſily be learn'd by heart, and committed to memorie, and often and earneſtly meditated and thought upon, being ſet downe unto us in ſo faire and eaſie order of the Hebrew Letters.

This Part, or Portion, which wee have now in hand, is the foureteenth; and doth containe in it many worthy and gracious Leſſons for our inſtruction and devotion in heavenly things, propoſed unto us out of the practice and Chriſtian carriage of this holy Prophet, and *Man of God, David*, a perfect patterne of all true zeale and pietie.

In the thirteenth Portion, immediately going before, *David* had delivered ſpecially two things.

Two things obſervable in the 13. Part.

First, How by his love, reading, ſtudy, and meditation in Gods Word, he had attained moſt excellent knowledge, wiſedome, and underſtanding; ſo that thereby he was become *farre more wiſe than his enemies*; that is, than *Saul* and all his politike Courtiers and Counſellors of State. Hee had *more underſtanding than his Teachers*, than the great Doctors, and Rabbins; for all their deepe Learning being not ſanctified unto them. He underſtood more than the grave and ancient men, for all

1 How *David* became wiſer than his enemies.

the worldly wiſedome and great experience they had gathered in many yeeres, and through length of dayes. Where, by the way, take this Leſſon.

Doct. True wiſdome to be had only from and in the Word.

There is no wit or policie, not all the Learning in the World, or worldly wiſedome, can make a man truly wiſe, (that is, wiſe unto ſalvation) but onely a powerfull and working knowledge out of the holy Word of God.

The Reaſon. Becauſe other wiſdome provides only for the body, but this for the ſoule.

The Reaſon is: Becauſe all other wiſedome doth onely provide for the Body, for a temporall happineſſe in this life, for a few and evill dayes, and leaves the Soule in a ſinfull and wretched eſtate; ſhortly, in the day of Viſitation, to be overtaken and fearefully confounded with ſtrange aſtoniſhments, horrors, and deſpaire; and hereafter, wofully to be tormented amongſt wicked Devils in the Lake that burnes with fire and Brimſtone for evermore. But wiſedome out of the Word of God doth ſo furniſh a mans Soule with Grace, and all holy Vertues, that in deſpight of all creatures, hee may live comfortably in this Vale of teares, and in endleſſe joyes in the World to come.

Now (I pray you) tell me, whether is truly the wiſer man; hee, that for an inch of time makes much of his wretched Body, that muſt ſhortly rot in the grave, and be devoured of Wormes, and turned into duſt; but in the meane time lets his immortall Soule, that can never die, ſinke into the Dungeon of everlaſting woe and miſerie: or hee, which by taking ſound and ſaving counſell and direction out of the Word of God, and howſoever

ſoever he be hated and neglected of this vaine World, yet yeelding chearefull and conſtant obedience thereunto, provides unſpeakable comfort, reſt, and bleſſednesse both for Body and Soule, through all eternitie?

Secondly, In the ſecond part and foure laſt Verſes of the former Portion, *David* ſets downe the fruit, uſe, and benefit which ſprung from his divine knowledge. It ſweetned his heart with much comfort, and ſound contentment, and cheared him with *joy unſpeakable, and glorious*, amidſt all croſſes and diſcomforts; it bridled and reſtrained him *from every evill way*; it kept and preſerved him in the paths of righteouſneſſe; it bred in him a hatred and loathing of the wayes of error, falſehood, and hypocriſie. Where, by the way, I would give you this other Leſſon.

2 He ſets downe the fruits of his knowledge

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Doct. All our knowledge muſt be practicall.

We muſt labour and be ſure that we draw our knowledge in Gods Word into practice, action, and exerciſe; otherwiſe, it will not onely be unprofitable and unfruitfull unto us, but indeed bring upon us a greater and more fearefull condemnation. For, *He that knowes his Maſters will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes*, *Luke* 12. 47. All our knowledge is in vaine, except by the power of it our inward affections be ſanctified, our words ſeaſoned with grace, our actions and converſations guided with ſpirituall wiſedome and unfained ſinceritie.

Luke 12. 47.

After *David* had thus, in the former Portion, layd downe unto us, and confeſſed what excellent knowledge he had got out of the Word of God,

and the precious fruit and benefit he had reaped and enjoyed by it: Now,

The foureteenth Part explaned.

In the firſt Verſe of this preſent Portion, hee makes, as it were, a proteſtation and profeſſion, that he is wholly and onely enlightened and led in all his wayes by this holy Word of God, as by a Light or Lanterne: The brightneſſe thereof doth not onely bring him into the wayes of righteouſneſſe, and bleſſed eſtate of Chriſtianitie, but doth alſo conduct and guide him in all the paths and particulars of his life and actions, in all the parts and paſſages of his ſpeciall calling: For he ſaith, *Thy Word is a Lampe unto my feet*] that is, whereby I ſee and diſcerne the way to Heaven, and the narrow path through the Kingdome of Grace; *and a Light unto my paths*] that is, a guide to direct me in every particular ſtep, at every turning, that ſo I may keepe a ſtraight courſe, and the readie way to the Kingdome of Glory.

That *David* had thus wholly yeelded and reſigned up himſelfe to be guided and governed by the glorious Light of Gods holy Word, appeares in the Verſes following.

1 *Verſ.* 106. Firſt, in *Verſ.* 106. by a ſolemne Oath and ſacred reſolution to keepe Gods righteous judgements, and an unfained and conſtant purpoſe to performe the ſame; *I have ſworne, and will performe it, that I will keepe thy righteous judgements.*

2 *Verſ.* 107. Secondly, in *Verſ.* 107. by his patiencie and ſufferance of wrongs, diſgraces, and afflictions, which the wicked and prophane World heaped upon him, for his profeſſion of holineſſe and ſinceritie.

ceritie. For, except he had loved and followed the Light of divine Truth, whensoever the fire of perſecution and tribulation, becauſe of the Word, had beene kindled againſt him, hee had ſhrunke backe and fallen away; *I am afflicted very much, quicken me, O Lord, according to thy Word.*

Thirdly, in *Verſ.* 108. by the offerings of his mouth, and calves of his lips; that is, the ſpirituall ſacrifices of prayers, thankſgiving, and gracious Vowes for Gods ſervice, which with a free and fervent ſpirit, and earneſt deſire of acceptation, he continually offered unto the Lord; *O Lord I beſeech thee, accept the free-will offerings of my mouth, and teach me thy judgements.* 3 *Verſ.* 108.

Fourthly, in *Verſ.* 109, 110. by his ſtedfaſtneſſe and ſticking to the Law and Word of God, though hee was beſet and ſtrongly incompaſſed with ſnares, with dangers, and with death it ſelfe: *His ſoule was continually in his hand*; that is, hee was ready and reſolved every houre rather to part with his life, than with a good Conſcience, to ſhed his bloud, rather than to forſake the Truth and Commandements of God: *My ſoule is continually in my hand, yet doe I not forget thy Law: The wicked have laid a ſnare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts.* 4 *Verſ.* 109, 110.

In the two laſt Verſes, upon the former reaſons hee concludes the Point; That his heart and inward affections do dearely embrace Gods bleſſed Word, as a moſt rich and laſting Inheritance, as his ſweeteſt and greateſt joy; and, that hee bends all the powers of his ſoule, and beſt endevours, to be led with, and to follow the Light thereof even 5 *Verſ.* 111, 112.

unto the end, untill it bring him to immortalitie and *Light, that no man can attaine unto: Thy teſtimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart: I have inclined my heart to performe thy Statutes alway, even to the end.*

1 Tim. 6. 16.

Thus you ſee in generall the meaning of this Portion.

Sixe markes to diſtinguiſh a godly man and an hypocrite.

Before now I deſcend unto particulars, and come to gather Notes ſeverally from the Verſes in order, let vs take notice, I beſeech you, (for our inſtruction and examination of our owne ſoules) of ſixe notable markes, and ſignes, by which a true Chriſtian may be diſcerned from a Temporizer; a ſincere ſerver of God, from a carnall Goſpeller.

1 *Verſ.* 105. A godly man is guided by the Word in all his wayes.

The firſt I gather out of the firſt Verſe: Every ſonne and ſervant of God doth with humilitie, chearefulneſſe, and obedience, yeeld and ſubmit himſelfe to be wholly and onely directed and guided by the Light of Gods Word, in all his wayes, both generally, of Chriſtianitie, and particularly, of his ſpeciall calling; as *David* here did. But the naturall man, that is not yet entred into, or acquainted with the ſtate of Grace, is led and guided in his courſes onely by the Light of Reaſon, and worldly Wiſedome; by good Meanings, without ground and warrant out of the Word; by a blind and ignorant Devotion; by the Multitude, Examples, Cuſtome of the Times, and ſuch like blind Guides: But if he take any advice and direction out of the Word of God, it is but in part, by halfes, and for a time.

A naturall man not at all.

Or in part.

A ſecond

A ſecond ariſeth out of the ſecond Verſe: Every Child of God doth not onely promiſe, vow, and purpoſe to forſake and abandon all his knowne ſinnes, to watch carefully and conſcionably over all his wayes, to delight in and to ſort himſelfe with godly and gracious companie, to have a reſpect to all his Commandements, and to keepe his righteous Iudgements; but hee doth alſo truly and throughly performe it: hee goes through-ſtitch with his ſpirituall affaires, and with conſtancie and courage walkes in a ſetled courſe of Chriſtianitie. But the unregenerate man, not yet ſoundly ſeaſoned with the power of Grace; how ſoever he hath ſometimes good motions and purpoſes ariſe in his heart, to forſake his former evill wayes, and to fall to godlineſſe; how-ſoever in the time of Sickneſſe, of ſome great Iudgement, or when his Conſcience is terrified by the Miniſterie of the Word, when he ſeriouſly thinkes upon the day of his death, and of that great and laſt Iudgement, or the like; hee makes Vowes with himſelfe, perhaps, that hee will be a new man, and change his courſes: But when he is once out of danger againe, when he comes to the point, and practice, he is not ſo good as his word, he doth not pay and performe his former Vowes and purpoſes; hee is preſently choaked againe with worldly Cares, and drowned in earthly Pleaſures: And ſo all his *goodneſſe is as a morning Cloud, and as the morning Dew it goeth away.*

2 *Verſ.* 106. He performes all his Vowes.

An unregenerate man doth not pay them.

Hoſ. 6. 4.

The third marke lyeth in the third Verſe: Every Child of God doth with contented patience, with

3 *Verſ.* 107.

He patiently ſuffers perſecution for the Word.

with ſtrong dependance upon Gods providence, with rejoycing in his ſufferings, beare and endure many miſeries and preſſures layd upon him for his profeſſion and practice of ſinceritie. He well knowes out of the Word of God, and feeles by his owne experience, *That all which will live godly in Chriſt Ieſus, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. And therefore he makes up his account with the World, and is at a point with all that is under the Sunne; hee is perſwaded, *that all the afflictions of this life are not neere worthy the glory which ſhall be revealed*, *Rom.* 8. 18.

2 *Tim.* 3. 12.

The carnall Goſpeller ſpares himſelfe.

But the carnall Goſpeller he thinkes it is good ſleeping in a whole skin; he lookes for a Goſpel of eaſe, for a ſoft and ſilken ſervice of God; for a *Church* (as one ſpeakes) *all of Velvet*. And therefore, rather than he will ſuffer any loſſe, or worſing, any diminution or diſparagement in his outward eſtate, in his reputation, wealth, and worldly happineſſe, he will *make ſhipwracke of a good Conſcience*; he will yeeld to the corruptions of the Times, and with the greater part, reſt and repoſe himſelfe peaceably and pleaſantly upon his Bed of eaſe, and carnall ſecuritie: never conſidering, that the Croſſe is the Chriſtians triumph; that Chriſt himſelfe was crowned with Thornes; and, that *wee muſt through many afflictions enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*, *Act.* 14. 22.

Act. 14. 22.

4 *Verſ.* 108. He is frequent in praying and prayſing. The other not.

A fourth marke may be gathered out of the fourth Verſe: The prayers and prayſings of God, in the mouth of Gods Child, are frequent, free, and fervent; but with the carnall Goſpeller, they

are

are very rare, cold, and formall. The Reaſon is; Gods Child is very ſenſible of his corruptions, and wants, hee ſtill longs and gaſpes for more grace, with a ſpirituall taſte he ſweetly reliſheth Gods great mercie and goodneſſe unto him; he hath the love of God and the ſpirit of prayer ſhed into his heart by the Spirit of Adoption; and therefore his heart is as full as the Moone, of godly motions and meditations, which like a continuall Spring ſends out groanes and ſighes unutterable, many zealous and faithfull prayers and thankſgivings unto his gracious God with a free and feeling affection. But the carnall Goſpeller, becauſe his underſtanding was never enlightened, his heart never truly humbled, his affections never ſanctified; becauſe he hath no ſence of his wretched eſtate, nor preſent feeling of grace, nor ſound hope and aſſurance of happineſſe in Heaven; why, therefore he hath no great mind, or heart, or liſt to prayer; hee hath no great delight, or exerciſe, in this holy buſineſſe: and if he doe pray (which is but ſeldome, and coldly) it is but lip-labour, and loſt labour, becauſe it is without faith, and feeling; for faſhion, cuſtome, or company, becauſe he was ſo taught in his youth; or that he ſuperſtitiouſly thinkes, the very worke wrought, and a number of prayers ſolemnely ſaid over, will ſanctifie him.

The Reaſon.

A fifth marke may be gathered out of the ſixt and ſeventh Verſes: The Child of God doth not onely paſſe through with patience, for the profeſſion of Gods truth and ſincerities, leſſe and inferiour

5 *Verſ.* 109, 110. He will loſe his life for God.

riour miſeries; as loſſe of goods, loſſe of friends and reputation with the World, ſlanders, diſgraces, and wrongs: but hee alſo *holds his ſoule* (as it were) *continually in his hand*, as *David* here ſayes of himſelfe; readie (if need be, and the times ſo require) even to ſhed his bloud vnder the Sword of Perſecution, or to lay downe his life in the flames, rather than to diſhonour ſo mercifull a God, to betray his holy Truth; or, by his backſliding and falling away, to hazard that Crowne of Glory, which by the eye of faith he hath alreadie in ſight. But the carnall Goſpeller, in time of peace and plentie, while he lives quietly, and at eaſe, without croſſe or trouble, in faire and Sunſhine dayes, may perhaps be a ſtout and peremptorie Profeſſor, but hee ever ſhrinkes in the wetting; he pulls in the head in the fierie triall: ever, *when trouble or perſecution commeth, becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.*

A temporarie is offended.

Mat.13.21.

6

The ſixt marke is gathered out of the two laſt Verſes: The Child of God holds his Word farre more deare than any precious Treaſure, than the richeſt Inheritance, than * *great Spoyles*, than * *thouſands of Gold and Silver:* It is the joy of his heart; and therefore it inclines and inflames his affections with love and zeale to doe Gods will, and fulfill all his Commandements. And no marvell though the true Chriſtian find moſt ſound and unconceivable delight in the Word of God, the Doctrine of Heaven: For by it, he is borne anew, and made heire of Heaven: by the Light of it, he ſees his Name written in the Booke of Life, never

*Verſ.*111,112. A Child of God counts the Word his greateſt Treaſure.

* *Verſ.*162.

* *Verſ.*72.

The Reaſon.

never to be raced out by man, or Devill; all the ſweet and gracious promiſes of ſalvation and comfort revealed in it, are ſure his owne: So that thence he knowes, and is perſwaded undoubtedly, that after a few and evill dayes ſpent in this miſerable life, he ſhall remaine and reigne eternally in the glory of God, of Chriſt Ieſus, the bleſſed Spirit, and the holy Angels. But it is otherwiſe with the carnall Goſpeller; for whatſoever ſhew or proteſtation he makes to the contrary, yet indeed in his heart, affections, and practice, hee preferres his pleaſures, riches, and profit, before hearing of Gods Word, ſanctifying his Sabbaths, and obedience to his Commandements. And no marvell: for becauſe hee yet never lived the life of faith, but is a meere ſtranger to the myſterie of godlineſſe, hee hath no true intereſt nor ſound aſſurance in the joyes of another World, and therefore feeds onely and fills himſelfe with tranſitorie and earthly contentments.

A Chriſtian man hath ſuch aſſurance in the good things of the world to come, that he can eaſily moderate his affections as touching earthly and tranſitorie things.

It is otherwiſe with an Hypocrite.

And why?

Now I beſeech you (beloved in Chriſt Ieſus) let every one with ſingleneſſe of heart and ſinceritie examine his owne Soule, and the ſpirituall ſtate of his Conſcience, by theſe ſignes and marks which I have now delivered to you, out of the example and precedencie of the Chriſtian affections and holy diſpoſition of *David*, a ſanctified man, and a principall patterne of pietie and zeale for all faithfull ones. *Know you not* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that Ieſus Chriſt is in you, except you be reprobates?* So undoubtedly, if Ieſus Chriſt be in you, if you be of *Davids* ſtampe and temper, that

2 *Cor.* 13. 5.

is,

is, alreadie poſſeſſed of the ſtate of grace, and marked out by the Spirit of ſanctification, for the glory that ſhall be revealed; you doe find in ſome good meaſure theſe markes and ſignes of an holy man in your ſelves.

1 That you are enlightened and guided by the Word of God in all your wayes.

2 That you have not onely good motions and purpoſes for a zealous and conſtant ſervice of God; but doe faithfully, with ſinceritie and integritie of heart performe the ſame.

3 That you ſuffer joyfully and patiently afflictions and diſgrace in the World, for the teſtimonie of Gods Truth, and profeſſion of ſinceritie.

4 That you freely and faithfully, with much feeling and fervencie of ſpirit, offer dayly prayers and prayſes unto the Lord.

5 That you had rather part with the deareſt and moſt precious things in this life, nay, life it ſelfe, than leave the ſervice of God, and the teſtimonie of a good Conſcience.

6 That you have more comfort and delight in hearing, reading, meditating, conferring of, and applying unto your owne ſoules the holy Word of God, than in the treaſures and glory of the whole Earth.

Such markes as theſe you muſt finde in your ſelves, if you ever meane or hope to finde true contentment in this life, or the comforts of Heaven in the life to come.

Now I come to a more ſpeciall and particular con-

consideration of every Verse in order, and thence to gather such Notes and Doctrines, as may best instruct us in the way to Heaven.

First, *David* tells us in the first Verse; That *Gods word is a Lanterne to his feet, and a Light unto his paths*: Which, that you may better understand, I will tell you the meaning of the words, and explaine unto you the severall reames.

Vers. 105. explained.

The Word is taken three wayes.

First, the *Word* may be taken three wayes.

1 For the substantiall Word of God, the second Person in the Trinitie, *Ioh.* 1. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.*

1 For the substantial Word.

2 It may be taken for the written and sounding Word; as it onely strikes the eare, and informes the understanding, but it is not conveyed, neither sinkes it into the heart by the powerfull assistance and sanctified concurrence of Gods Spirit, it being not prayed for to the conversion and sanctification of the whole man. And so the Word is heard and understood of many, that shall never be saved, but returnes unfruitfull.

The written and sounding Word.

3 It may be taken for the working and effectuall Word, as it is *the power of God unto salvation*; as it is rightly understood, applyed unto the heart and Conscience, possest of the thoughts and affections, and practised in the life and conversation. This Word thus understood, inlived, managed, and powerfully applyed by the Spirit of God, was a Light unto *Davids* steps; and so is a guide unto the paths of all true Christians, to the worlds end.

The effectuall Word. *Rom.* 1. 16.

That you may understand how the Word is a Light, you must consider,

2 What is meant by Light?

1 That

John 1. 4.

Mat. 5. 14. *Phil.* 2. 15, 16. *Prov.* 4. 18.

1 That Chriſt is called *Light*, *Ioh.* 1. 4. The Miniſters are called the *Light* of the World, *Mat.* 5. 14. The faithfull are *Lights*, *Phil.* 2. 15, 16. *The way of the righteous* (ſaith *Salomon*, *Prov.* 4. 18.) *ſhineth as the Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The Word of God is alſo called a *Light*; as in this place. But firſt,

1 Chriſt originally.

Mal. 4. 2.

Chriſt is Light of himſelfe, and originally; he is the Fountaine and everlaſting Spring of all the Light of Grace and Glory, both in Heaven and Earth; Hee is called, *The Sunne of Righteouſneſſe*. The Sunne, you know, hath his Light rooted in his owne faire Body, and receives that from none other; and with that, hee enlightens the Moone, the Starres, the Aire, the Earth, & all the World: Even ſo the bleſſed Sonne of God, *the Sunne of Righteouſneſſe*, hath in himſelfe, and from himſelfe, the Light of all Wiſdome and Knowledge, Mercie and Comfort; and from him floweth and ſpringeth whatſoever Light of Glory is revealed unto his bleſſed Saints and Angels in Heaven, or whatſoever Light of Grace is ſhed into the hearts of his ſonnes and ſervants here upon Earth.

2 Miniſters, miniſterially.

Revel. 1. 20.

2 The Preachers of the Word are Miniſters and Meſſengers of this Light; and therefore are but Light miniſterially. They are *as the Starres*, and ſo they are called, *Rev.* 1. 20. They receive all their Light from the *Sunne of Righteouſneſſe*, CHRIST IESVS, and either doe or ſhould convey and caſt their borrowed beames upon the earthly, cold, and darkſome hearts of the people of God, that they might *turne from Darkeneſſe*

Act. 26. 18.

to

to Light, from the power of Sathan unto God, Act. 26. 18.

3 The Word is Light instrumentally; which being powerfully sanctified unto us for our salvation, and being holden out unto us by a conscionable Ministerie, is as a Candle or Torch, to guide us through the darknesse of this World, unto our eternall Rest. The Word instrumentally.

4 Lastly, the faithfull are Lights *Subjectivè*; because they receive this Light into their Vnderstandings, (whereby they see the Wonders of Gods Law, the Secrets of his Kingdome, and the great Mysterie of Godlinesse, and the way to Heaven;) into their Consciences, (whereby they have their sinfull miserable estate by nature discovered unto them, and the way to Christ for remedie and salvation;) into their affections, (whereby they are enkindled with zeale for Gods truth, honour, and service;) into their actions, and conversation, whereby *they shine as Lights in the World, amid a naughtie and crooked generation, Phil. 2. 15.* And after the *Sunne of Righteousnesse* once arise in their hearts, like the Sunne in the Firmament, they shine more and more in all holy Vertues, *unto the perfect day*, untill they reach the height of Heaven, and the full glory of the Saints of God. The faithfull are the subjects of this Light. *Phil. 2. 15.*

In the third place, [*by Feet*] is meant his minde and understanding, his affections, thoughts, actions, his whole life, all his wayes. All these in *David*, were guided by the Light of Gods Word. 3 What is meant by *Feet*.

4 What, by Paths.

Laſtly, by *Paths*, are meant every particular ſtep, every turning and narrow paſſage in his ſpeciall calling. For this Light, the Word of God, doth not onely *guide a mans feet into the way of peace*, and put him in the right way to Heaven; but alſo goes along with him, inlightens and directs every ſtep, that his feet doe not ſlide. It ſo informes him with ſpirituall wiſedome, that hee layes hold on every occaſion for the glorifying of God, deſcries every little ſinne, and appearance of evill, diſpoſeth every circumſtance in his actions, with a good conſcience, and warrant out of Gods Word.

The meaning of the Verſe.

This then is the meaning of this Verſe. *David*, the man of God, had the Word of God working powerfully upon his ſoule, as a Light: that is; As a Lampe is to the life and ſafetie of the body, in darke and dangerous places; ſo was this Light to the life and ſalvation of *Davids* ſoule, in the darkeneſſe of this World, and ſhadow of death: *To guide his feet and paths*; that is, his mind, affections, thoughts, actions, his whole life, all his wayes, and every particular ſtep and paſſage thereof.

This Verſe being thus underſtood, let us now come to gather ſome Leſſons and Doctrines for our inſtruction.

The firſt ſhall be this:

Doct. 1. There is no man can hit the way to Heaven, or walke in the paths of Righteouſneſſe, through the Kingdome of Grace in this World, unto the Kingdome of Glory in the World to come, except he be inlightened, informed, and inſtructed in the holy Word of God.

The

The ſecond Note wee gather out of this Verſe, ſhall be this:

The Word of God is a Light, not onely to guide us into the way to Heaven, and inſtruct us in our generall calling of Chriſtianitie; but alſo to leade us along in a courſe of godlineſſe, and to direct us particularly in our ſpeciall calling. *Doct.* 2.

I will firſt follow the former Doctrine; which in few words, and plainely, I thus propoſe unto you.

No man can at firſt finde the entrance, or after hit the way to Heaven, except he be enlightened and led along by the holy Word of God. For *David*, as here wee ſee, a man of great worth, and underſtanding, otherwiſe excellently and extraordinarily qualified; could not find out, or follow any other Guide, or direction to Heaven, but onely the Light of Gods Word. *Doct.* 1.

The Reaſons of this Doctrine, may be theſe which follow.

The firſt may be taken from the inſufficiencie and inabilitie of all other meanes, to bring us to Heaven: as, *Reaſon* 1. No other meanes can bring us to Heaven.

1 All the greateſt Learning and deepeſt knowledge in the World, will ſtand us in little ſtead in this buſineſſe: Otherwiſe it had gone well with many ancient Heathens and Philoſophers of old, who ſadomed as deepe, and reached as high in the depths and myſteries of all humane Learning and knowledge, as the light of Reaſon and ſtrength of Nature could poſſibly bring them: And yet they were utterly ſtrangers to the life of Not humane Learning.

grace, and *without God in the World. When they profeſſed themſelves to be wiſe, they became fooles*, ſaith *Paul*, *Rom.* 1. 22. They were puffed up with a little vaine-glorious knowledge here upon Earth, and got them a Name amongſt men: But, alas, what was this? When as for the want of the Light of Divine Truth, they loſt their Soules in another World, and their Names never came in the Booke of Life. *Where is the wiſe?* (ſaith *Paul* in another place) *Where is the Scribe? Where is the Diſputer of this World?* As if hee ſhould have ſaid: All the knowledge of the greateſt Doctors and learnedeſt Rabbins in the World, without Grace, vaniſheth into nothing, into vaine-glory, emptineſſe, and aire; nay, caſts them with greater horror, and confuſion, into the Pit of Hell. *Every man* (ſaith *Ieremie*) *is a Beaſt by his owne knowledge*, נבער כל־אדם מדעת *Ierem.* 10. 14. Except, beſides all other knowledge, he be enlightened from above, and have that Divine knowledge ſanctified unto him, hee can come no neerer the happineſſe of Heaven, than a very Beaſt.

Epb. 2. 12.

Rom. 1. 22.

1 *Cor.* 1. 20.

Ier. 10. 14.

Not worldly wiſedome. The wiſedome of Gods Booke, & mans brain, ſtand at oddes, with an everlaſting oppoſition, *Rom.* 8. 7. * 1 *Cor.* 1. 19.

2 Worldly wiſedome and policie is ſo farre from making men wiſe unto ſalvation, that it is not onely ſtarke fooliſhneſſe with God and good men, but it doth ſtrongly ſet it ſelfe and is at enmitie againſt God. Therefore, ſaith God; *I will deſtroy the wiſedome of the wiſe, and will caſt away the underſtanding of the prudent*, * 1 *Cor.* 1. 19. *Ahitophel* was ſo wiſe even in the affaires of Kingdomes, and buſineſſe of State, that *the counſell which he counſelled*

2 *Sam.* 16. 23.

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in thoſe dayes, was like as one had asked counſell at the Oracle of God; and yet all this great wiſedome in the end ended in extreme folly: for upon a little diſcontent and diſgrace in the World, *he ſadled his Aſſe, and went home unto his Citie, and put his houſehold in order, and hanged himſelfe*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 23. & 17. 23. Although the end of all worldly wiſedome be not ſo ſhamefull in the eye of the World, yet undoubtedly it is moſt miſerable and wofull in the World to come, except their wiſedome be ſanctified and over-ruled by the Light of Gods Word. Carnall wiſedome can neither preſerve a man from death, nor prepare him to die bleſſedly: it cannot ſtay his Life from going, neither can it ſtop the Curſe from comming; it cannot deliver him from damnation in the World to come, but rather encreaſeth the grievouſneſſe of his puniſhment: for in this life it hath kept poſſeſſion againſt heavenly wiſedome, it made him uncapable of all good inſtructions, it made him impatient of any rebuke, and held him in ignorance and diſobedience all his life. 2 *Sam.* 17. 23.

3 No good meanings or intentions, without knowledge and warrant in the Word of God, will ever ſerve our turne for ſalvation; nay, indeed they are abominable and hatefull in Gods ſight. Howſoever, thouſands deceive themſelves in this point. *Vzzah* had a good meaning, in 2 *Sam.* 6. 6. when hee put his hand to the Arke of God, and held it; for the Oxen did ſhake it: but notwithſtanding, the Lord was very wroth with *Vzzah*, and God ſmote him in the ſame place, and there hee died. Nor good meanings. 2 *Sam.* 6. 6.

died. *Iames* and *Iohn* had good meanings, when they called for fire from Heaven to conſume the Samaritan, that would not entertaine Chriſt; but Ieſus rebuked them, and told them, *they knew not of what ſpirit they were.* *Saul*, in 1 *Sam.* 15. had a good meaning, when he ſpared *Agag*, and the beſt of the Sheepe, and of the Oxen, to ſacrifice them unto the Lord; but notwithſtanding *Samuel* tells him, that *he had done wickedly in the ſight of the Lord, and that the Lord had rent the Kingdome of Iſrael from him that day.* *Peter* had a good meaning, when in *Ioh.* 13. 8. he would not ſuffer Chriſt to waſh his feet; but Ieſus anſwered him, and told him, *If I waſh thee not, thou ſhalt have no part with me.* Good meanings then are wicked miſſings of the true ſervice of God, except they be guided by knowledge, warrant, and ground out of the Booke of God. Let no man then tell of his good meaning, if he be ignorant in the Will and Word of God, for certainely it will never ſerve the turne, it will never hold out in the Day of Chriſt Ieſus.

Luk. 9. 54, 55. 1 Sam. 15. Ioh. 13. 8.

Not will-worſhip. Col. 2. 23.

4 No will-worſhip, or will-ſervice, or voluntarie Religion, as the Apoſtle calls it, *Col.* 2. 23. which is forged and framed out of a mans owne braine, humour, and conceit, without ground or warrant in the Booke of God; though it be performed with never ſo glorious a ſhew of zeale and paines, yet it is not any way availeable for our ſpirituall good, and eternall happineſſe: nay indeed, it is moſt odious in the eyes of God, and ever lyable to a very high degree of his wrath and vengeance.

Baals

Baals Prophets, 1 *Kings* 18.28. were so hot and hastie in their will-worship, *that they cut themselves with knives, and launcers, till the blood gushed out upon them.* The Papists they whip themselves, they vow Continencie, perpetuall Povertie, and Regular Obedience; and yet is the profession and practice of both, bloudie and idolatrous. When the Iewes worshipped God after the devised fashions of the Gentiles, though their meaning was to worship nothing but God, yet the Text saith, *they worshipped nothing but Devils*, *Deut.* 32.17. And God there protests, that therefore *a fire was kindled in his wrath, that should burne unto the bottome of Hell, and set on fire the foundations of the mountaines.* So hated of Almightie God is all service and worship devised by the wit and will of man, without warrant in the Word of God.

1 *King.* 18.28.

Deut. 32.17.

5 Lastly, not the Word of God it selfe in the Letter, without the spirituall meaning, and the finger of Gods Spirit to apply it powerfully to our soules and consciences, is any sufficient rule of life, or able to bring us into the Light of Grace. This appeares in *Nicodemus*, who was a great Doctor in the Law, and the Prophets, a chiefe *Master and Teacher in Israel*; yet was a very Infant and Ideot in the power of Grace, and mysterie of godlinesse. For all his learning in the Letter of the Law, he had not yet made one step towards Heaven; for hee was not onely ignorant of, but had a very absurd and grosse conceit of the new birth; which is the very first entrance into the Kingdome of Grace. For when Christ told him, hee could

Not the Word it selfe in the Letter, without the meaning.

Ioh. 3.10.

not be ſaved, except hee were new borne, hee ſtrangely and fooliſhly replyes; *How can a man be borne, which is old? How can he enter into his mothers Wombe againe, and be borne?* Thus you ſee, there can no other meanes be named, or thought upon; not all humane Knowledge, nor worldly Wiſedome, nor good Meanings, nor Will-worſhip, nor the Word it ſelfe in the Letter, which can leade us into the wayes of Righteouſneſſe, or bring us unto Heaven; but onely the Light of Gods holy Word, holden out unto us by a profitable Miniſterie, and the power of the Spirit.

Vers. 4.

Reaſon 2. The Word workes regeneration; without which, no ſalvation.

A ſecond Reaſon of my Doctrine may be this: No man can ever ſee the Kingdome of God, except he be borne againe, except he be a new creature, a new man, as is plaine in Chriſts words unto *Nicodemus*. For our new birth, or regeneration, is the neceſſarie paſſage from Nature to Grace; from prophaneneſſe, to ſinceritie: It is that whereby wee are wholly ſanctified and ſet apart unto God, from the ſinfull corruption of our naturall birth, and the evill fruits thereof, to ſerve God in our whole man, both body, ſoule, and ſpirit. Now you muſt conceive, that this new birth muſt neceſſarily ſpring from the *immortall Seed of the word of God*; for ſo it is called, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. It is the Seed of our new birth, ſalvation, and immortalitie. And you may as well looke for Corne to grow up in your fields without ſowing, without caſting any Seed into the furrowes, as to looke for Grace to grow up

What regeneration is?

1 *Pet.* 1. 23.

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in your hearts, or to reape the fruit of holinesse, everlasting life; except this immortall Seed, the Word of God, be first cast into the furrowes and fallow ground of your hearts, and be there received with reverence and attention, nourished with prayer and meditation, and fructifie in your lives and conversations. Hence it is, that Gods Word is called, *The Word of Salvation, Act.* 13. 26. *The Word of Grace, Act.* 14. 3. *The Word of Life, Phil.* 2. 16. *The Power of God unto Salvation, Rom.* 1. 16. For there is no power of Grace, or spirituall life, to bee had ordinarily upon Earth, or salvation and eternall life to be hoped for in Heaven; except a man be enlightened with the knowledge, and enlived with the power of the holy Word of God. There is no entring into the Kingdome of God, except a man bee new borne, except hee bee first renewed in his spirit, soule, and body: And there is no new birth, without the * immortall Seed, the Word of God. And therefore, without knowledge and direction in the Word of God, no salvation.

Act. 13. 26.
Act. 14. 3.
Phil. 2. 16.
Rom. 1. 16.

* See *Dearing, pag.* 325.
1 *Cor.* 4. 15.
Iam. 1. 18.

The third Reason of my Doctrine, is this: The Word of God hath only the power and propertie to search into and to sanctifie the whole man, even to the inmost thoughts and the secret cogitations of the heart. All the devices and imaginations of mans heart lye without the walke of humane justice, and censure: no word or writing of man is able to bridle them, or bring them within compasse; no Law of Nature, or Nations, can affright

Reason 3. The Word is able to sanctifie the whole man.

or reſtraine the freedome and wanderings of thoughts: onely the Word of God can amaze, ſearch, and ſanctifie them. *The weapons of our warfare* (ſaith *Paul*) *are not carnall, but mightie through God to caſt downe Holds; caſting downe the imaginations, and every thing that is exalted againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivitie every thought into the obedience of Chriſt,* 2 *Cor.*10.4,5. *The Word of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle to the Hebrewes) *is lively and mightie in operation, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword; and entreth through, even to the dividing aſunder of the ſoule and the ſpirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart, Heb.*4. 12.

2 *Cor.*10.4.

Heb. 4. 12. opened.

The Word is ſaid to be lively in three regards.

It quickens.

It laſts for ever. *Pſal.*119.89.

It diſperſeth it ſelfe, and ſearcheth into every part of the ſoule.

The Word of God may be ſaid to be living or lively in three reſpects.

1 Becauſe, whereas we naturally live under the ſhadow of death, and in the darkeneſſe of ſinne, it quickens us with a new and ſpirituall life, it cheares and comforts us with heavenly Light.

2 The Word may be called Living, becauſe it ſelfe is immortall, and laſteth for ever; as doth the living and eternall God, the Author of it.

3 But moſt eſpecially, and agreeably to the place in the Hebrewes, it is called *lively*, becauſe it enters with great power and ſecret inſinuation into every part and power both of ſoule and body: So that as our life is ſcattered and diſperſed into every little part, and leaſt veine in us, and we feele it both in paine and pleaſure; even ſo the vertue of the Word of God pierceth into every member, into the moſt ſecret and hidden Cloſet of the heart,

heart, either to breake and bruiſe with terror and aſtoniſhment the very bones, & cruſh the ſinewes of the ſinfull ſoule; or to fill them with marrow and fatneſſe, and to refreſh the affections of the truly penitent with joy unſpeakable, and glorious. God tells us in *Ieremy*, that his Word is like *fire*; and therefore it can eaſily inſinuate into all the creekes and corners of our corruptions; it can fully and clearely enlighten our Conſciences, and diſcover unto us the ſinfulneſſe of the moſt lurking and ſecret thoughts. *Ier.* 23. 29.

Thus you have this firſt Doctrine plainely proved and confirmed unto you.

No man can at firſt finde the entrance, or after hit the way to Heaven, except he be enlightened and led along by the ſaving knowledge of the holy Word of God.

No other meanes, which the power of Nature, Wiſedome, Learning, or the whole World can afford, will ſerve the turne in this buſineſſe of Salvation. It is the Seed of our new birth (as I told you;) there can be no growing of grace, or reaping of glory, without it: It hath onely power to ſhake, ranſacke, and ſearch into the inmoſt ſecrets of the heart: It onely can ſanctifie us both inwardly and outwardly, both in ſoule and body, both in thoughts and actions; without which, both inward and outward holineſſe, no man ſhall ever ſee the face of God.

Vſe 1. Confutation of Papiſts, who keepe the Word in an unknowne Tongue.

Now I come unto the Vſes of this Doctrine. And in the firſt place, it may ſerve for confutation of the Papiſts, thoſe great empoyſoners and murtherers

therers of infinite ſoules of men. Is the Word of God as a Lampe, and a Light, without which wee cannot ſee the firſt ſtep, or ſet one foot aright towards Heaven? Why then, ſinfull and peſtilent is their practice, who hide this bleſſed Light from the people of God, in an unknowne Tongue; and by their bloudie Inquiſition, damme up the holy Fountaines of heavenly Truth, which ſhould ſpring up in every mans heart unto eternall life: Whoſe cruell and craftie Religion (for, blond of Princes, and curſed Policie, are the principall ſupporters of Poperie) teacheth them to blindfold and hood-winke the poore Laitie in forced ignorance, leſt they ſhould know Gods will, or any way to Heaven, but theirs; which indeed is the right, direct, and deſperate downe-fall into the Pit of Hell: So that millions of ſoules live no leſſe without Scriptures, than if there were none; and wofully walke in this World, through darkeneſſe of ſinne, ſhadow of death, and ignorance both of God and his Word, unto endleſſe and utter darkeneſſe in the World to come. The Prophet *David* tells us, in *Pſal.* 19. *That the Law of the Lord is perfect, and giveth wiſedome unto the ſimple: The Commandements of the Lord is pure, and giveth light to the eyes.* In this place hee tells us, That the Word was a Lampe unto his feet, and a Light unto his paths. Chriſt himſelfe, *Iohn* 5.39. bids us, *Search the Scriptures:* even all, without exception; ſo many as looke for eternall life. Not lightly, and at leiſure to reade them, but with diligence to dive into them; for ſo the word ſignifies

Pſal. 19. 7, 8.

Ioh. 5. 39.

nifies in the Originall: To ſeeke for the right knowledge, and true ſenſe of them, *as for Silver, and to ſearch for it as for Treaſures.* The Noblemen of Berea, *Act.* 17. 11. *ſearched the Scriptures dayly, whether thoſe things were ſo, that were preached unto them.* Saint *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. calls the Word of the Prophets, *a Light, which ſhineth in a darke place, to which wee ſhould take heed.* But the Pope, and his Factors, teach other Leſſons. The Catholike Church (ſaith one of their chiefe * Champions, out of the Councell of * *Trent*) forbids the reading of Scriptures by all, without choiſe, or the publike reading, or ſinging of them in vulgar Tongues. The wiſe will not here regard (ſay the Rhemiſts in their Preface to their Teſtament) what ſome wilfull people doe mutter, that the Scriptures are made for all men. And ſoone after, they reſemble the Scriptures to Fire, Water, Candles, Knives, and Swords; which are indeed needfull, &c. but would marre all, if they were at the guiding of other than wiſe men: And this is indeed one of their principall reaſons.

Prov. 2. 4.

Act. 17. 11.

2 *Pet.* 1. 19.

* *Bell. de Verb. Dei*, 2. *cap.* 15. *At Catholica Eccleſia, &c.*
* *Seſſ.* 22. *ca.* 8. *Can.* 9.

Many abuſe the Scriptures by ignorance, infirmitie, or malice, to Errors, Hereſies, Schiſmes, and their owne deſtruction: therefore they are not to be read of all, without choiſe.

Obiect. The Scriptures are ready to be abuſed by the ignorant, to error, hereſie, &c.

I anſwer; they might as well reaſon thus: Many men abuſe Meat and Drinke, by ſurfetting and exceſſe, to the deſtruction both of their ſoules and bodies: therefore men are to be deprived of Meat and Drinke. Some men are infected with the Peſtilence, by drawing in corrupted and empoyſoned

Anſw. So may Meat be abuſed, and the Aire infected: yet they are not to be taken away.

poyſoned aire: therefore the aire is to be taken away, and removed. But as thoſe men which are deprived of Meat and Drinke, preſently languiſh and pine away, and die a temporall death; and thoſe that enjoy not the benefit of the aire, are preſently ſtifled, for want of breath: even ſo, all thoſe that want the ſpirituall Food of their ſoules out of the Word of God, and the holy inſpirations of his good Spirit builded thereupon; howſoever they be fat and flouriſhing in their outward eſtates, yet they are full leane and lanke in their ſoules; and if they ſo continue, muſt needes die an eternall death, and periſh everlaſtingly. Let us then learne to deteſt and hate the bloudie Policie of the Synagogue of Rome, which cruelly keepes from many thouſand Soules that bleſſed Light of Gods Word, which ſhould lead them to eternall life. They indeed pretend other Reaſons: But the truth is, if the Word of Truth ſhould be permitted and publiſhed to all, there would be old running out of Babylon; all their Pompe and Policie would downe; their ſhamefull Iuglings and Couſenages, their ſtrong Deluſions and Impoſtures would be laid open, in the ſight of the Sunne. The Princes of the Earth, that have ſo long beene drunken with the wrath of her empoyſoned Wine, would no longer commit Fornication with her. The Merchants would buy no more her Wares; but would ſtand afarre off from her, for feare of her torment, weeping, and wailing. No marvell then, though the Papiſts labour might and maine, and to this end

Rev. 18.

maintaine

maintaine a bloudie Inquiſition, to ſuppreſſe this Light of Gods Word, leſt it ſhould diſcover their darkneſſe, and haſten their deſtruction.

A ſecond Vſe, is for terror, feare, and amazement to all them that doe not live and delight in the Light of Gods holy Word, but yet are walking in the darkeneſſe of ignorance, and in the ſhadow of death. *The whole World*, and every man in particular, *lyes in darkeneſſe*; that is, in ignorance, under ſinne; and ſo ſubject and lyable to damnation and eternall death. There is no way to come out of this ſtate of Darkneſſe, Damnation, and Death, but by the Knowledge, Light, and Miniſterie of the Word. Hence it is, that *Act.* 26.18. it is *Pauls* charge, and hee is ſent to this purpoſe, *to open the eyes of men, that they might turne from Darkneſſe to Light.* And *Paul* himſelfe, *Eph.* 5.8. ſpeakes thus unto the Epheſians; *Yee were once Darkeneſſe, but now yee are Light in the Lord; walke as Children of the Light.* Out of 1 *Pet.* 2.9. it appeares, that all Gods Children are called *out of Darkeneſſe into marvellous Light.* Why then, fearefull and moſt-wretched is the ſtate of all thoſe, who by the Light and knowledge of Gods Word are not tranſlated and guided out of this Darkeneſſe. For, as in Darkeneſſe,

1 There is much feare, * horror, and diſcomfort; a man cannot enjoy the lightſomeneſſe of Heaven, the comfort of the creatures, the companie of men: Even ſo ignorant men, not enlightened with ſaving knowledge, are utterly without all hope of Heaven; they have no ſight or

Vſe 2. Of terror to them that delight not in Gods Word.

1 *Ioh.* 5.19.

Act. 26.18.

Eph. 5.8.

1 *Pet.* 2.9.

The ſtate of thoſe that are in Darkeneſſe.

He is in feare. * *Gen.* 15.12.

or taſte of the endleſſe joyes thereof; they have no companie or conference in heavenly matters with true Chriſtians; they have no comfort or intereſt in the Covenant of Grace, or Promiſes of Salvation: But Feare, Horror, and Deſpaire are moſt juſtly treaſured up for them *against the Day of Wrath, and of the declaration of the juſt Iudgement of God.*

Rom. 2. 5.

He knowes not whither he goes. Iob. 12. 35.

2 *He that walketh in the Darkeneſſe* (ſaith *Iohn*) *knoweth not whither he goeth:* He cannot diſcerne his way; he ſeeth not what is behind, or before him; he cannot deſcry or diſcover the dangers which are round about him: But eſpecially, if the wayes through which he paſſeth, be ſlipperie, ſteepe, and rockie, full of pits and holes, he is in danger at every ſtep, by ſome grievous fall, to cruſh his body, bruiſe his bones, or breake his necke. It is juſt ſo with every one that lives in ignorance of Gods Word, and Truth; he cannot poſſibly diſcerne the way to Heaven, amongſt the many by-paths of iniquitie; he cannot judge in ſpirituall matters betwixt right and wrong, good and evill, Light and Darkeneſſe, Chriſt and *Belial*, prophaneneſſe and ſinceritie; though there be behind him, a Life ſpent in much wickedneſſe, lewdneſſe, and ignorance; before him, Deſpaire, Hell, and eternall Damnation; about him, the World, with a thouſand baites and pleaſures, to intice and intangle him in ſinne; Sathan, like a roaring Lyon, readie every houre to ſeize upon his Soule, and to teare it in pieces, while there is none to helpe; all the creatures armed, and in a readineſſe,

The ſtate of ignorant men.

readineſſe, with whole Armies of Plagues, and Vengeance, to be revenged upon him, for dishonouring God, by ignorance in his Word: Yet hee ſees none of all this. Hee neither knowes, feeles, or ſuſpects theſe many dangers, with which he is incompaſſed; but goes on plodding, with ungrounded confidence, and wicked ſecuritie, in the way of wickedneſſe and deſtruction: hee paſſeth, with much deſperate boldneſſe, through many dangerous and fearefull wayes; wherein, at every ſtep, he wounds his Conſcience with one ſinne or other in the meane time, and at length falls headlong, and ſuddenly, body and ſoule, into the Pit of Hell. This is certainely the miſerable and wofull ſtate of all thoſe that live in ſpirituall Darkeneſſe, and are ignorant in Gods Word, and the wayes of godlineſſe. It may be they may flatter, pleaſe, and perſwade themſelves, that their caſe is good enough; that, when they heare of Heaven, and thoſe everlaſting pleaſures at Gods right hand, they thinke notwithſtanding that they ſhall come thither at length; though they know never a foot of the way, take no direction by the Light of Gods Word, nor ſet one ſtep, by new obedience, towards that place of bleſſednеſſe. But indeed and truth they doe very fearefully deceive and over-ſhoot themſelves: And their caſe is juſt, as if a man ſhould fall aſleepe upon the edge of ſome high and ſteepe Rocke; and there dreame, that he is made a King, attended with a glorious Traine of Nobilitie, furniſhed with ſumptuous Pallaces, and ſtately Buildings, enriched

Similie.

riched with the Revenues, Soveraignetie, and Pleaſures of a whole Kingdome: But upon the ſudden, ſtarting up, and leaping for joy, falls irrecoverably into the mercileſſe and devouring Sea; and ſo loſeth that little comfort, which he had in this miſerable life. Many wretched men lye and ſleepe and ſnort in ignorance and ſpirituall blindneſſe; thinking, that skill in the Booke of God, and points of Religion, belongs onely to thoſe that are Booke-learned; entertaining much vaine hope of ſalvation, without all truth or ground: But when upon their Death-bed, their Conſciences are awakened by the finger of Gods juſtice, out of the ſlumber of ſinne, they then too late find and ſee, that all was but a Dreame; for they ſuddenly fall and ſinke into deſpaire, horror, and endleſſe deſolation. The ſtate then of ignorant men, though perhaps they little thinke upon it, or take it to heart, is moſt fearefull in this life, and will be moſt horrible hereafter. In this World; becauſe they are unacquainted, and untaught in Gods Truth, points of Religion, and way to Heaven; they neither know their owne miſerie, the great myſterie of godlineſſe, or meanes to ſalvation; and therefore *live as aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſe, without hope, and without God in the world:* Which is a miſerie of all miſeries; *They are condemned alreadie:* For as it is, *John* 3. 18. *He that beleeveth not in him, is alreadie condemned.* And Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 10. 14. *How ſhall they beleeve in him, of whom they have not heard; and how ſhall they heare,*

Eph. 2. 12.

Joh. 3. 18.

Rom. 10. 14.

heare, without a Preacher? So, that without knowledge in Gods Word, there can be no faith; and without faith, there is no ſalvation. You may further ſee a notorious Linke of many wretched miſchiefes, which ariſe from ignorance, *Eph.* 4. 17,18,19. *Vanitie of mind*, and *darkeneſſe of underſtanding* are naturally in all men; for wee are all ſtarke blinde, and utterly dead, in reſpect of matters of Heaven, and ſpirituall affaires. From thence comes, groſſe Ignorance of God, and all godlineſſe; and this Ignorance, if it be not removed and diſpelled by the Light of Gods Word, is the root and cauſe of ſtrangeneſſe from the Life of God: Hardneſſe of Heart; Searedneſſe of Conſcience, and want of Feeling; an itching, wantonneſſe, and eagerneſſe to ſinne; a committing of any ſinne, without remorſe, occaſion being offered; an unſatisfiedneſſe and greedineſſe in the purſuit of ſinfull pleaſures, and *in fulfilling the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and pride of life.* Theſe are the bitter and poyſoned fruits of Ignorance, and want of knowledge in the Word of God, and way to Heaven. And what is to be expected hereafter, appeares 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 7, 8, 9. *The Lord Ieſus will ſhew himſelfe from Heaven, with his mightie Angels, in flaming fire, rendring vengeance unto them that doe not know God, and which obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting perdition from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* Seeing then the comming of the Lord will be ſo terrible and fearefull to the ignorant, ſo that they ſhall

*Eph.*4.17,18,19.

The fruits of ignorance.

1 *Ioh.*2.16.

2 *Theſſ.*1.7,8,9.

deſire the Mountaines to fall upon them, that they might hide themſelves from the fierce wrath of the Lord, and not behold his fearefull countenance; and that they ſhall wiſh full many times, they had never beene borne; how ought every man, which lives without the Light and knowledge of Gods holy Word, feare and tremble? And yet, God knoweth, hee cannot conceive the thouſand part of thoſe horrible torments which the ignorant and wicked perſons endure for ever.

1 Cor, 2, 9. For as the heart of man cannot comprehend thoſe bleſſed and glorious joyes, which God hath prepared for thoſe that love him; ſo the woe, torments, and endleſſe vexations, which ſhall be poured with wrath and vengeance upon the head of the wicked, infinitely paſſe the underſtanding of man: None can conceive how horrible they are, but onely he that feeles them. It very deepely then concernes you (Beloved in Chriſt Ieſus) as you tender the everlaſting good and happineſſe of your owne ſoules, to labour by all meanes to be inſtructed and inlightened by the holy Word of God, which is holden out unto you, as a Lampe and Torch, to leade you through this Vale of Teares, and World of Darkeneſſe, to the bleſſed fruition of the moſt glorious and everlaſting Kingdome of Heaven. Otherwiſe, if you will needes continue in ignorance ſtill, marke what is your wofull ſtate and condition: howſoever you may ſeeme to ſhine outwardly, to the eye of the World, or in your owne conceits, in pleaſures, in plentie, in civill honeſtie, in outward mirth, and other

other worldly contentments; yet, in deed and truth, your life is a life of darkeneſſe. *The god of this World, the Prince of Darkeneſſe, hath blinded the eyes of your mindes, that your Vnderſtandings are not onely darkened*, but *you are Darkeneſſe it ſelfe*, *Eph.* 5. 8. Your workes are the workes of Darkeneſſe, your way is the *way of Darkeneſſe*; you are fettered and enchained *in the power of Darkeneſſe*, *Coloſſ.* 1. 13. In the darkeneſſe of croſſes and afflictions of this life, you ſhall be without any glimpſe of true comfort and refreſhing from the Lord: upon your Death-beds, you ſhall meete with nothing but darkeneſſe of deſpaire and horror: in the Grave, Sathan will guard you with the Barres of the Earth, as in a Bed of hopeleſſe Darkeneſſe, untill the Iudgement of the great Day. And that Day will be unto you, *a Day of wrath, a Day of trouble and heavineſſe, a Day of deſtruction and deſolation, a Day of Clouds and blackneſſe:* as it is, *Zeph.* 1. 15. And at the laſt, you are to be caſt, body and ſoule, from the preſence of God, and joyes of Heaven, into utter Darkeneſſe, there to be tormented amongſt wicked Devils, for ever and ever. This is certainely the ſtate of all ignorant men, and thoſe that will not be enlightened with ſaving knowledge out of his Word: There is nothing to be expected of them, but Darkeneſſe, Sorrow, Deſpaire, and Horror.

2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

Epheſ. 4. 18.

Epheſ. 5. 8.

Prov. 4. 19.

Coloſſ. 1. 13.

Zeph. 1. 15.

A third Vſe of this Doctrine, may ſerve for admonition to all thoſe, who by the Light of Gods Word have alreadie found and are entred

Vſe 3. Admonition to take the Word for our guide.

into the way to Heaven; that they would ſuffer themſelves with humilitie, obedience, and conſtancie, to be led along in a courſe of ſanctification, by the holy guidance and direction thereof; that they would ſhine dayly more and more in all Chriſtian vertues, exerciſes, and duties. For it is the propertie of all thoſe which are become new creatures, who are waſhed from their ſinnes, ſanctified, and new-borne by the immortall Seed of the Word, and the Spirit of Grace; to long after, and earneſtly *deſire the ſincere Milke of the Word, that they may grow thereby* in knowledge, comfort, and new obedience. A new-borne Babe will be pleaſed and ſatisfied with nothing but the Pap; not Gold, Pearles, or any thing elſe will content it: even ſo a new-renewed Soule doth ever hunger and thirſt after the ſacred and *ſincere Milke of Gods holy Word*, as Saint *Peter* calls it, that it may dayly gather ſtrength in grace; otherwiſe, as the Child, ſo it would languiſh, pine away, and die. He that growes not, and goes not forward in grace, had never true grace. He that faithfully labours not to feed his ſoule with ſpirituall food, never paſſed the new birth. *The way of the righteous* (ſaith *Salomon*) *ſhineth as the Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day*, *Prov.* 4. 18. For if the Day-ſtarre of ſaving knowledge once appeare unto a man, and *the Sunne of Righteouſneſſe ariſe in his heart*; they never ſet, untill they bring him unto that glorious Light above, that no man can attaine unto. He proceeds and profits in the great myſterie of godlineſſe, in faith, repen-

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Prov. 4. 18.

Mal. 4. 2.

repentance, and ſinceritie; he growes from vertue to vertue, from knowledge to knowledge, from grace to grace, untill hee become *a perfect man in Chriſt Ieſus.* It may be, as the faireſt Sunne may ſometimes be over-caſt, and darkened with Clouds, and Miſts; ſo the holineſſe of a godly man may be over-clouded and diſgraced ſometimes, by falls into a ſinne, upon infirmitie, ignorance, heedleſneſſe, or the like: But, if he be ſo overtaken; after his paſſing through ſorrow and griefe of heart for the ſame, and his riſing againe by repentance; hee ſhines farre more brightly and pleaſantly both to God and man, in ſinceritie and all holy graces; he afterwards runnes a more ſwift and ſetled courſe in the race of ſanctification. So that ordinarily all Gods children *ſhine as Lights in the World, in the midſt of a naughtie and crooked generation*, being once inlightened with ſaving knowledge; and they ſtill waxe brighter and brighter, untill at laſt they come to ſhine *as the brightneſſe of the Firmament, and the Starres in Heaven, for ever and ever.* Looke to it then, I beſeech you: whoſoever hath alreadie given his Name unto Chriſt, taſted of the good Word of God, and received into his ſoule ſome glimpſes of heavenly Light; let him be ſure to follow hard towards the Marke, for the Prize of the high calling of God, in Chriſt Ieſus: Let him ſet his beſt deſires, affections, and endeavours, to grow and proceed in all holy knowledge, in the Light of Gods Word, and chearefull obedience unto the ſame. For it is a ſpeciall note

Eph. 4. 13.

Phil. 2. 15.

Dan. 12. 3.

and marke of a man that is truly religious, to goe forward, and encreaſe in grace and underſtanding: Hee muſt be like the Sunne, which, riſing in the Eaſt, enlargeth his glorious light and heat, untill he reach the height of Heaven. But, as one well notes; the true Chriſtian muſt not be like *Hezekiahs* Sunne, which went backward: If a man back-ſlide, waxe worſe, and fall away from good beginnings, he addes weight unto the wrath of God, and doubles his damnation: Hee muſt not be like *Ioſhuahs* Sunne, that ſtood ſtill. It is ſo farre to Heaven, and the way ſo narrow, ſo rough, and full of dangers and difficulties, that he which ſtands at a ſtay, will light ſhort: The Bridegroome will be entred in, and the Gate ſhut, before he come. Hee that hath ſo much grace, that hee deſires no more, did never truly deſire any: And he that endeavours not to be better, will by little and little grow worſe, and at length become ſtarke naught. He therefore muſt be like *Davids* Sunne, that great and glorious Gyant of the Heavens, *that like a Bridegroome comes out of his Chamber, and as a Champion rejoyceth to runne his Race.* One grace in Gods child, begets another; and one holy action, performed with ſinceritie of heart, doth inflame his affections with love and zeale, with courage and reſolution, to undertake moe, and to goe through-ſtitch with all the affaires of God, and good cauſes. For he alone knowes the invaluable worth, and ineſtimable price of heavenly Iewels; and therefore he is raviſhed with their beautie, and growes unſatiable in his deſires and

Iſai. 38. 8.

Ioſh. 10. 12.

Matth. 25. 10.

Pſal. 19. 4, 5.

and longings after them. He is ſtill toyling and labouring in the Trade of Chriſtianitie, for more gaine of grace, encreaſe of comfort, and further aſſurance and ſecuritie of the joyes of Heaven. Sith hee hath alreadie taſted and fed upon celeſtiall and ſpirituall food, he findes in that ſuch unutterable ſweetneſſe, and pleaſant relliſh, that hee for ever after hungers and thirſts after it. If then you would be aſſured, that you are in the way to happineſſe, be ſure to be led on by the Light of the Word in all heavenly knowledge, ſpirituall wiſedome, and holy obedience.

A fourth and laſt Vſe of my Doctrine, is for inſtruction to all; whether they be naturall, or ſpirituall; ignorant, or inſtructed in the Word of God: That they make it their chiefe and principall Chriſtian care, zealouſly, and conſcionably, and conſtantly to heare, attend, and underſtand the holy Word of God; and to be guided and conducted by the Light thereof in all the paſſages of their life, and wayes of their converſation. *Vſe 4. Inſtruction. See Chryſoſt. in Matth. pag. 76.*

1 And in this point, I will, firſt, lay downe unto you certaine Motives, that may induce and ſtirre you thereunto.

2 Cautions, or Caveats, to fore-arme and forewarne you of Lets, and Temptations, that may with-draw you there-from.

3 Laſtly, ſome needfull inſtructions for your right carriage therein.

One Motive, to ſtirre us up to a reverend regard and attention, in hearing the Word of God; to a love and liking of the heavenly knowledge therein con- *Motives. 1*

contained, and to a ſound and ſincere practice of it, in our lives and converſations, may be this: The Word of God is, as it were, *an Epiſtle or Letter* (as one of the Fathers calls it) *written from God Almightie* unto us miſerable men, publiſhed by his owne Sonne, ſealed by his Spirit, witneſſed by his Angels, conveyed unto us by his Church, *the Pillar and ground of Truth*, confirmed with the bloud of millions of Martyrs, which hath alreadie brought thouſands of ſoules to Heaven, and fills every heart that underſtands it, and is wholly guided by it, with Light and Life, with Grace and Salvation. Now let us imagine a man to have a Letter ſent unto him but by an Earthly King, or ſome great Prince in the World; wherein hee ſhould have a Pardon granted him for ſome capitall Crime, and high Offence, whereby hee were lyable to a terrible kind of death; or wherein hee ſhould be fore-warned of ſome great and imminent danger hanging over his head, and readie every houre to fall upon him; or, wherein hee ſhould have aſſured and confirmed unto him, under the Kings Seale, ſome rich Donation, or great Lordſhip. Now I ſay, if a man ſhould receive but a Letter from ſome high and mightie Potentate upon Earth, wherein any of theſe favours ſhould be conveyed unto him; how reverently would he receive it? how thankfully would he accept of it? how often would he reade it? how warily would he keepe it? how highly would he eſteeme of it? Why, in this royall and ſacred Letter ſent from the King and great Commander both of Heaven and

The Word is a Love-Letter from God.

Quid eſt autem Scriptura ſacra, niſi quadam Epiſtola Omnipotentis Dei ad creaturam ſuam? Greg. Epiſt. lib. 4. Epiſt. 48.

1 Tim. 3. 15.

Simile.

and Earth, all theſe favours, and a thouſand more joyes and comforts, are conveyed unto every beleever and practiſer thereof. In that, we are forewarned, leſt by our ignorance, impietie, and impenitencie, wee fall into the Pit of Hell, and everlaſting horror: In that, we have promiſed and performed unto us the pardon and remiſſion of all our ſinnes, whereby wee juſtly ſtand guiltie of the ſecond death, and the endleſſe torments of the damned. By the vertue of it, we are not onely comforted with grace in this World; but ſhall undoubtedly be crowned with peace, glory, and immortalitie in the World to come. Such a Letter as this, hath the mightie and terrible God, moſt glorious in all Power and Majeſtie, who is even *a conſuming and devouring fire*; ſent unto us miſerable men, by nature wretched and forlorne creatures, Duſt and Aſhes: why then, with what reverence, chearefulneſſe, and zeale, ought wee to receive, reade, heare, marke, learne, underſtand, and obey it?

2 The matter contained in it, is excellent and precious.

A ſecond Motive, may be the precious, golden, and divine matter which is contained in the Booke of God, and that true and ever-during happineſſe, to which it onely can bring us. There is nothing propoſed and handled in the Word of God, but things of greateſt weight, and higheſt excellency: As, the infinite majeſty, power, and mercy of God; the unſpeakable love and ſtrange ſufferings of the Sonne of God, for our ſakes; the mighty and miraculous working of the holy Spirit upon the ſoules of men. There is nothing in this Treaſury, but Orient Pearles, and rich Iewels; as, promiſes of grace,

grace, ſpirituall comfort, confuſion of ſinne, the triumph of godlines, refreſhing of wearied ſoules, the beautie of Angels, the holineſſe of Saints, the ſtate of Heaven, ſalvation of ſinners, & everlaſting life. What Swine are they, that neglecting theſe precious Pearles, root only in the Earth, wallow in worldly pleaſures, feede upon vanities, tranſitorie traſh, and vaniſhing riches, which in their greateſt need will *take them to their wings, like an Eagle, and flie into the Heavens?* Beſides, the Word of God is only able to prepare us for true happineſſe in this world, and to poſſeſſe us of it, in the world to come. It only begets in us a true, intire, and univerſall holi-

Heb. 12. 14. neſſe; *without which, none ſhall ever ſee the face of God*, or the glory of Heaven: for it is impoſſible, hereafter to live the life of glory & bleſſednes in Heaven, if we live not here the life of grace and ſincerity, in

1 Pet. 1. 23. all our waies. It is called *the immortall Seed*, becauſe it regenerates and renewes us both in our Spirits, Soules, and Bodies: *in our Spirits*; that is, in judgement, memory, & conſcience: *in our Soules*; that is, in our will and affections: *in our Bodies*; that is, in every member. If the Prince of this world hath not blinded the eyes of our minds, and that we be not reprobats, as concerning ſalvation, it only is able to inlighten our underſtandings, to rectifie our wills, to ſanctifie our hearts, to mortifie our affections; to

Pſal. 141. 3. ſet *Davids Doore* before our *lips, that we offend not with*

Iob 31. 1. *our tongues*; to ſet *Iobs Doore* before our *eyes, that they behold not vanity*; to manacle our hands & feet with the cords and bands of Gods Law, that they do not walke or worke wickedly: nay, and it is able to furniſh

furniſh and ſupply us with ſufficiencie of ſpirituall ſtrength, to continue in all theſe good things, and in a godly courſe vnto the end. And if we be once thus qualified, we are rightly fitted and prepared for the glory that is to be revealed. As before, this holy Word did tranſlate us from the darkneſſe of ſinne, into the light of grace; it can now much more eaſily, with joy and triumph, bring us, from the light of grace, to the light of immortalitie, and everlaſting pleaſures at Gods right hand.

3 We muſt be judged by the Word, *Ioh.* 12. 47, 48.

A third Motive may be this: Wee muſt be judged by the Word of God at the laſt Day. *If any man* (ſaith Chriſt, *Ioh.* 12. 47, 48.) *heare my words, and beleeve not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the World, but to ſave the World: He that refuſeth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have ſpoken, it ſhall judge him in the laſt Day.* Whenſoever wee ſhall come to judgement, and appeare before Gods Tribunall, (and wee little know how neere it is) two Bookes ſhall be layd open unto us; the one, of Gods Law; another, of our owne Conſcience: The former, will tell us what wee ſhould have done; for the Lord hath revealed it to the World, to be the rule of our faith, and of all our actions: The other, will tell us what wee have done; for Conſcience is a Regiſter, Light, and Power in our Vnderſtanding, which treaſures up all our particular actions againſt the Day of Triall; diſcovers unto us the equitie, or iniquitie of them; and determines of them, either with us, or againſt us.

Conſcience, what it is.

Now

Now we muſt not take any exception againſt the firſt; that is, the Law of God: *For the Law of God* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.*19.7.) *is perfect, converting the ſoule: The teſtimonie of the Lord is ſure, and giveth wiſedome unto the ſimple.* Wee cannot againſt the ſecond; that is, the Booke of our Conſcience: for it was ever in our cuſtodie and keeping; no man could corrupt it; there is nothing writ in it, but with our owne hands. Now, in what a terrible fearefull caſe will a man be at that Day, when he ſhall ſee the Booke of God layd open before him; in the Light whereof hee ſhould have led all his life, and by which he is now to be judged; and yet know himſelfe to have had no knowledge, but to have beene a meere ſtranger in it? Though *the great things of the Law* were many times publiſhed and preached unto him, yet hee counted them but as a *ſtrange thing*. Every mans Conſcience is naturally corrupt, defiled, and uncomfortable; and can endure and digeſt reaſonable quietly the rage of diſordered affections, many vile corruptions, and ſinfull actions: and therefore, at the laſt Day, when it ſhall be awakened, opened, examined, it will bring forth nothing, but the Worme that never dyes, ſtrange confuſion, and condemnation; except it hath beene formerly in this World enlightened, purged, and ſanctified by the Word of Grace, and the Bloud of the Lambe. Moſt accurſed then, and forlorne, will be the ſtate of every ignorant man, when he ſhall appeare before the Iudge of all the World: When he lookes upon his Conſcience, he ſhall finde nothing

*Pſal.*19.7.

*Hoſ.*12.8.

thing but guilt, and horror: when upon the Law, and upon the Word of God, after which he ſhould have lived, and by which he muſt now be judged; it will be to him but as a *ſealed Booke*; hee will ſee nothing but his owne ignorance, blindneſſe, and ſtrangeneſſe in it: And therefore, all the Plagues and Curſes denounced in it againſt ignorant, wicked, and unrepentant ſinners, ſhall be his portion, in the Lake that burnes with fire and Brimſtone for evermore. This ought then to ſtirre up every man, with all care and Conſcience, to ſtore himſelfe, while he hath time, with ſaving knowledge and holy obedience unto that Word, which muſt be his Iudge in the laſt Day: Nay, and let him take heed unto his feet, and looke unto his behaviour, when hee enters into the Houſe of God: *Eccleſ. 5. 1.* For in that Day he muſt anſwer and be countable for every Sermon that he hath heard, and for every Leſſon he hath beene taught out of the Booke of God: If they have not enlightened his underſtanding, they have hardened his heart; if they doe not now reforme him, they will hereafter confound him; if he doe not profit by them, he ſhall be ſure to be plagued for the neglect of them: For Gods Word is unto every man that heares it, either *the ſavour of life unto life*, or *the ſavour of death unto death*: *2 Cor. 2. 16.* It is *a two-edged Sword*; *Heb. 4. 12.* it either kills the ſinne, or the ſoule; it muſt and *ſhall proſper in the worke for which it is ſent*. *Iſa. 55. 11.* God will rayſe glory, hee will winne honour unto himſelfe, from every man. If hee cannot be glorified, by his converſion, and ſalvation; hee will glorifie his owne

owne Name, in his deſerved overthrow, and juſt confuſion.

4 A fearefull judgement ſhall befall the not hearers and practiſers of the Word. *Math.*10.14,15.

A fourth Motive may be; That horrible and fearefull puniſhment and deſtruction, which at length will certainely befall all negligent and contemptuous hearers, and thoſe that practiſe not the power thereof in their lives and converſations. *Whoſoever* (ſaith our bleſſed Saviour) *ſhall not receive you, or heare your words; when yee depart out of that houſe, or that Citie, ſhake off the duſt of your feet: Truly I ſay unto you, it ſhall be eaſier for them of the Land of Sodome and Gomorrah, in the Day of Iudgement, than for that Citie.* The infamous abominations, the damnable and crying ſinnes of the Sodomites are knowne unto all: Who hath not heard of thoſe flouds of fire and Brimſtone, which ſwept them away, as the hatefulleſt creatures that ever lived upon the Earth? How rufull then, and how lamentable will be their condition, who are lyable and ſubject to more horrible plagues than theſe? Wee ſhould therefore conſider, that the negligent, irreverent, and unprofitable hearing of the Word of God, is a ſinne of a farre greater weight, and more fearefull conſequence, than we ordinarily imagine. When wee heare the Miniſters, and Embaſſadours of God, delivering his mind, and revealing his Will unto us, out of ſuch places as theſe, we are to conceive, that in a neerer and more ſpeciall manner, wee ſtand in the preſence of the great God of Heaven and Earth, who is clothed with infinite terrour, power, and majeſtie; and thereafter, we ought to proportion

proportion our behaviour and carriage, with reverence, humility, and obedience to ſo great a preſence. Earthly Princes will not endure contempt and diſgrace at their ſubjects hands: They cannot abide to have their Majeſtie and authority lightly ſet by, their lawes and commands to bee neglected and troden under foot: Why then ſhould the Lord of glory, of juſtice and power, beare ſuch indignities at the hands of ſinfull men, which are his moſt abject vaſſals, and contemptible creatures? Certaine it is, if wee weigh aright the greatneſſe of that God, before whom wee ſtand, and our owne vileneſſe, wee ſhould hold it moſt juſt, if he ſhould preſently in the place where we ſtand, puniſh and plague our ſleepineſſe, talking, wandring thoughts, and irreverent carriage at hearing his Word, with ſome ſudden and markable vengeance, to be a ſpectacle & example unto others, for neglecting ſo great ſalvation. It is Gods great mercy that ſuch plagues and judgements are reſpited, ſuſpended, and deferred; for even all the curſes in the booke of God doe naturally, deſervedly, and in the courſe of Gods juſtice, belong unto the negligent hearer, and diſobedient unto the Word of God. *All theſe curſes* (ſaith *Moſes Deut.*28.49.) *ſhall come upon thee and purſue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be deſtroyed, becauſe thou obeyeſt not the voice of the Lord thy God.*

Simile.

Deut 28.49.

I come now in the ſecond place to the temptations and lets whereby a man may bee hindered from hearing the Word of God, profiting by it, and a conſcionable practiſing of the ſame.

Hinderances from profiting by the Word.

Let 1. Atheiſme.

Some thinke the Word to be but a humane policie.

The higheſt in impiety, and moſt horrible, is a ſpi'ce of Atheiſme, which Satan ſuggeſts into worldly men, wher by they wickedly, and very blaſphemouſly thin'e, that the ſacred Word of God, is but a politike invention and deviſe to keepe men in awe and order, in Cities and ſocieties, and to preſerve them from wildneſſe and outrages. But I would gladly know whoſe worke and invention it is, if it be not Gods Almighty?

A removing of this.

It is not mans: For it directly and ſtrongly oppoſeth againſt the ſtreame of his ſenſuall delights, and earthly pleaſures: It curbs his moſt deſired contentments, and croſſeth the naturall bent of his affections.

It is not Satans: For he in all ages hath fiercely and furiouſly ſet himſelfe againſt it; and it is the engine that batters and beats downe his kingdome of darkneſſe.

* It may bee diſcerned by a proper, naturall, and inherent Majeſtie from all humane writings and imitatory deluſions and impoſtures of Satan; ſuch as is the Alcaron

It is not any Angels, or other creatures: For the *Majeſtie, excellencie, miraculous efficacie, and wonderfull power of Gods Word, is farre above the reach and capacity of any creature; tranſcendent to all created underſtandings, and finite comprehenſion. Beſides, the famous miracles, the many viſions, the true fore-telling of things to come, the inward, lively and effectuall workings upon the ſoules of the elect, and many other ſingular and ſacred markes & characters of divinity ſtamped upon it, doth plainly ſhew, that it is the alone holy invention of Gods divine, pure and infinite underſtanding, and revealed to the world for the inlarging of Gods glory, and the ſalva-

ti on

tion of many a thouſand ſoules; for the confuſion of the kingdome of Satan, and juſt condemnation of the children of hell. Take heed then in the name of God, that you give not entrance or entertainment to any ſuch fearefull blaſphemous temptation, whereby the love and zeale to Gods Word may be cooled, or you grow leſſe carefull in purchaſing and practiſing the knowledge and power of it. This let layes hold onely upon men of a reprobate ſenſe, and thoſe that are already marked out for certaine damnation.

Let 2. Recuſancie.

A ſecond let and hinderance from hearing the Word of God, is recuſancie, the cozenage and impoſture of Popery. For ſuch is the wickednesſe and cruelty of that ſuperſtition and myſtery of iniquity, that it labours might and maine to keepe all the world cloſe priſoners in the dungeon of darkneſſe and ignorance, and for ever to deprive them of the light of the Goſpell. The prophane profeſſors of this bloudy Religion, hold ignorance to be the mother of devotion, and a very dangerous thing for ſimple people to pry into the Booke of God. And ſo they doe more ſafely and ſecurely feed their followers with their owne damnable principles of treaſon, rebellion, diſloyalty and diſobedience to lawfull Kings. So they lead ignorant people which way, and as farre as they will in the kingdome of darkneſſe, even to beleeve that blowing up of whole ſtates, and killing of Kings, are very glorious acts, and merit the brighteſt crowne of immortality, and the higheſt ſeat in heaven. I hope in the Lord there

there is none of you, but with all his heart hates and deteſts this bloudy, murtherous, and Idolatrous generation; and will by no meanes ſuffer his right eye of knowledge in Gods Word to be put out by theſe curſed Ammonites.

Adde here another let, which is Separatiſme, See *Ta. pag. 79.*

Let 3. Hardneſſe of heart, and deſperateneſſe in ſinning.

A third let and hinderance, is the height of hardneſſe of heart, and moſt damned deſperateneſſe in ſinning, when men are become ſo greedy of fulfilling their ſinfull pleaſures, that they drinke up ſenſuall delights like water, draw on iniquity *like cords of vanitie, and ſinne as with cart-ropes:* For then they beginne to ſay with themſelves, even to God himſelfe, with them in *Iob* 21. 14,15. *Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes. Who is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhould we have if we ſhould pray unto him?* And with thoſe to whom *Iſaiah* in his fifth Chapter denounceth a fearefull woe; *Let him make ſpeed, let him haſten his worke, that we may ſee it, and let the counſell of the Holy one of Iſrael draw neare and come, that wee may know it.* Men that are poſſeſſed with ſuch a rebellious and ſcornfull ſpirit as this, neither much care for God or his Word, threats or promiſes, judgements or mercies, heaven or hell. No marvell then though they ſet light by Gods miniſters, and ſeeke not for inſtruction in holy knowledge, and heavenly wiſdome. That wee may be preſerved from this horrible and deſperate caſe, and ſo fearefully hardning our hearts againſt the Word of life and ſalvation,

Iob 21. 14,15.

Iſa. 5. 19.

A preſervative againſt this.

ſalvation, we muſt be very carefull and watchfull, that wee give not way, paſſage, and entertainment to wicked thoughts, and the firſt ſinfull motions: for in this manner, a man proceedes to the height of ſinne, and a reprobate ſenſe. There firſt ariſeth in his Heart an idle and wandering thought of ſome unlawfull thing; as of Luſt, Covetouſneſſe, Pride, Malice, prophaning the Sabbath, Cozening, and circumventing his Brother; and ſuch like. Secondly, it begins to allure, entice, and conferre with the Will. Thirdly, the Will doth, as it were, take it by the hand, and is tickled, pleaſed, and delighted with it. Then followes Conſent: Conſent ſets the affections on foot, and plots the accompliſhment and practice of it; and ſinne practiſed with pleaſure, brings Cuſtome. Cuſtome ſharpens a mans wit, and makes him looke about, how to excuſe it: From excuſing ſinne, hee growes to defend it: Defence of ſinne, makes him obſtinate, and reſolved to continue in it: Obſtinateneſſe begets boaſting, and glorying in it. And if a man once become impudent, and take a pride in ſinning, there preſently follows a brazen Brow, and whoriſh fore-head, an yron ſinew in the necke, a heart as hard as the nether Milſtone, a ſeared Conſcience, and a reprobate ſenſe. Theſe are the ſteps, by which a man riſeth into the Seat of the ſcornefull: And upon the top of theſe ſtayres, Sinne ſits in the greateſt triumph and ſoveraigntie; and baniſheth out of a mans heart, all feare of God, love to his Miniſters, and zeale unto his Word.

The degrees in ſinne.
1 A motion to ſinne.
2 The Will inticed.
3 Delight.
4 Conſent.
5 Practice.
6 Pleaſure.
7 Cuſtome.
8 Excuſing.
9 Defending.
10 Continuance.
11 Boaſting.
12 A reprobate ſenſe.

Let 4. A conceit, that Gods Law, like mens Lawes, takes hold of, and will condemne onely notorious ſinners.

A fourth Let and hinderance from hearing Gods Word, and yeelding entire obedience unto it, is a very peſtilent and politike conceit, which poſſeſſeth the hearts of very many; whereby they are perſwaded, That Lawes divine are but like humane or mens conſtitutions: As theſe execute none, but chiefe Malefactors; ſo theſe Decrees of God will at laſt condemne none, but infamous and notorious ſinners. And therefore, if they be but pettie Offendors, or onely maintaine but one ſweet ſinne in themſelves; if they be not of the worſt ſort, though they be not ſo forward hearers of Sermons, ſo Scripture-wiſe, or hold ſuch a ſtrict courſe of holineſſe in their converſation: yet they thinke with themſelves, their caſe is good enough, and that it will goe well enough with them at laſt. Hence it is, that they are cold, and careleſſe, in eſteeming of hearing, and conforming themſelves to the Miniſterie of the Word. But let no man deceive himſelfe: The deſtruction of the negligent hearer of the Word of God, and the diſobedient to the Goſpel of Chriſt Ieſus, ſhall be as the deſtruction of * *Sodome*, and farre more grievous. He that lyes and delights in any one knowne ſinne, of which his Conſcience is convicted, is in a feareſull caſe. *Without faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God:* and, *Without holineſſe, no man ſhall ſee the face of the Lord.* And none hath either faith, or holineſſe, without ſaving knowledge out of Gods Booke. Without the New-birth, and continuance in grace unto the end, no man ſhall be ſaved: And, ſincere obedience to a conſtant and

This Let is removed, *Mat.*11.23,24.

*Heb.*11.6.

*Heb.*12.14.

and conſcionable Miniſterie of the Word, is a meanes both to beget, nouriſh, and continue ſaving grace. And, let mens conceits be what they will; as ſure it is, as God is in Heaven, not one jot or tittle of all the Plagues and Curſes regiſtred in Gods Law, but ſhall be ſeverely executed upon all ignorant and unrepentant ſinners, and *poured upon the hairie ſcalpe of all ſuch as goe on ſtill in their wickedneſſe.* Pſal. 68. 21.

A fifth Let and hinderance of hearing the Word of God, is an exceſſive and immoderate delight, and an eager and earneſt purſuit of the ſinfull pleaſures of a mans ſweet ſinne. * By a mans ſweet ſinne, I meane that, which his corrupt nature hath ſingled out, and made ſpeciall choiſe of, to follow and feed upon, with greateſt delight and ſenſuall ſweetneſſe; which, by cuſtome and continuance, hath taken deepeſt root and ſureſt hold in his heart: upon which, all his affections and deſires are carried with ſharpeſt edge, heat, and headlongneſſe; and to which, hee makes all occaſions and circumſtances, friends and acquaintance, Religion and Conſcience, all the powers both of ſoule and body, and outward eſtate, ſerviceable and contributorie, as to that which chiefely rules and reignes in him. This ſweet ſinne, in ſome, is Worldlineſſe, Earthly-mindedneſſe, and Covetouſneſſe: In others, it is Voluptuouſneſſe, Luſt, and Vncleanneſſe; Pride, Pleaſures, Drunkenneſſe, or ſuch like. Now certaine it is, carnall, prophane, and unregenerate men, doe many times preferre the pleaſures of their ſweet

Let 5. An eager purſuit of a mans ſweet ſinne.

* What is meant by a ſweet ſinne. *Quemadmodum nemo tam perditus, aut flagitioſus invenitur: quin ab aliquo vitio magis quàm ceteris abhorreat; ſic nemo tanta ſimilitudis eſt, quin ad unum aliquod peccatum, quam ad cetera propenſior ſit.* Cart. p. 1162.

and moſt delightfull ſinne, before the comforts of Gods Houſe, the Congregation of the Saints, and the precioufneſſe of the Word preached. And therefore, howſoever they may ordinarily come to Sermons, (though it be rather for faſhion, and of cuſtome, than with heartie and true devotion) yet if ſome ſpeciall gaine and profit be to be layd hold upon at that time; if ſome extraordinarie pleaſure, feaſting, paſtime, and companie be then to be enjoyed; they make no Conſcience to turne their backes upon the Houſe of God, and the Miniſterie of the Word, even upon the Sabbath day: ſo, for a little ſinfull pleaſure, or worldly contentment, wretchedly abandoning Gods holy Ordinance, and the neceſſarie meanes of their owne ſalvation.

Math. 22. *Luke* 14. The Parable of the great Supper ſet out by 3. circumſtances.

That many men are thus wickedly hindered from hearing the Word of God, appeares in *Math.* 22. and *Luke* 14. The glorious magnificence, and rich comforts of heavenly Cheare in the Houſe of God, are notably ſet out unto us there, by divers circumſtances, in the Parable of the great Feaſt. 1 Firſt, it was a Wedding Feaſt; which uſually is full of joy, comfort, and great ſolemnitie. 2 Secondly, it was made by a King; and therefore, like unto himſelfe, Royall, and Princely, in plentie and varietie, anſwerable to his State and Greatneſſe. 3 Thirdly, it was made at the Marriage of a Kings ſonne; which would make it yet farre more ſumptuous, full of pompe, and noble entertainment, than if it had beene for a ſervant, friend, or ordinarie perſon.

By

By all this, is meant the Miniſtery of the Word, and Goſpel of Chriſt Ieſus; wherewith every faithfull man is feaſted, made Gods ſonne, and married to Chriſt himſelfe for ever, *in righteouſneſſe and in judgement, in mercie and in compaſſion.* This Feaſt being in full readineſſe, Servants are ſent out, to invite Gueſts: But for all the glory, comfort, and magnificence prepared for them, in this Wedding, and Royall Feaſt; many refuſe to come, and make excuſe: One ſaith; *he hath bought a Farme, and muſt needes goe to ſee it:* another hath bought *five Yoke of Oxen, and goes to prove them:* another hath *married a Wife, and therefore he cannot come:* another is buſied about *his Merchandiſe,* buying and ſelling, and can hardly ſpare ſo much time.

What is meant by it.

Hoſ. 2. 19.

Luke 14. 18.

19.

20.

Matth. 22. 5.

Thus one ſinfull delight or other, profit, pleaſure, companie, or the like, doe many times ſtay and hinder prophane and worldly men from hearing the Word of God, and from this ſpirituall and heavenly Feaſt in his Houſe; whereby their ſoules might be ſatisfied, *as it were with marrow and fatneſſe,* with the comforts of grace, and a taſte of the joyes of Heaven. It is very ſtrange, that any man ſhould be ſo bloudie and cruell to his owne ſoule; that, whereas by the breaking of the Word of Life unto him in ſuch places as this, he might have it furniſhed with ſpirituall ſtrength, towards everlaſting life: yet for ſome earthly pelfe, and temporall pleaſure, abſenting himſelfe, he ſuffers it to ſtarve in ignorance and prophaneneſſe; the immediate and certaine paſſages to eternal death.

Pſal. 63. 5.

Let

A counterpoyſon againſt this.

Let a man imagine with himſelfe, when he purpoſes and reſolves to abſent himſelfe from a Sermon, that hee layes, as it were, in the one Scale of the Weights, the glorious Majeſtie, preſence, and honour of God; the comfort, happineſſe, and ſalvation of his owne Soule: and in the other, a little wretched pleaſure, or profit; and ſo ſuffers this miſerable Vanitie to weigh downe ſo infinite a Majeſtie.

1 Gods Houſe is the Preſence-Chamber of the King of Glory.

For, firſt, Gods Houſe, where his Word is faithfully preached, is, as it were, the Preſence-Chamber of the everlaſting King of Glory. Here he ſits in a Chaire of State, with more ſpeciall and eminent Power and Majeſtie, as anciently he ſate betweene the Cherubins.

2 Chriſt is there. *Matth.* 18. 20. *Rev.* 1. 12.

Secondly, Chriſt himſelfe is here preſent: For, *Whereſoever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the midſt of them.* And ſo he is ſaid, *to walke in the midſt of the ſeven golden Candleſticks*; and with ſpeciall power and providence to direct and guide theſe holy Exercíſes.

3 The Spirit is there.

Thirdly, the holy Spirit of God is preſent, in our Aſſemblies; plentifully ſhedding into the hearts of the faithfull, the rich Treaſures of Wiſdome and Grace.

4 The Angels are there. 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 12.

Fourthly, the bleſſed Angels of God are here; as appeareth, 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. not onely to doe ſervice unto the Lord, unto the Elect, and unto his Miniſterie; but alſo, after a ſort, to ſolace and rejoyce themſelves in the beautie of Gods Houſe, and in the Myſteries publiſhed in the Goſpel: as appeares 1 *Pet.* 1. 12.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Gods holy Saints here preſent themſelves; in whom, all our delight and comfort ought to be: for they onely are truly excellent, allyed unto Chriſt, and heires of Heaven.

5 The Saints are there. *Pſal.16.3.*

Laſtly, here alone ordinarily are to be had Bleſſings, Life, and Salvation: for the Word preached is the ordinarie meanes to beget the unconverted unto God; by inlightening their eyes, opening their eares, ſoftening their hearts, planting faith in their ſoules, and holineſſe in their converſations: ſo that, of the children of wrath, they become the ſonnes of God. Hence it is, that it is called, *a Miniſterie of Reconciliation, of Peace; a Word of Grace; of Salvation, and of Life.*

6 The effect of the Word to the unconverted. *2 Cor.5.18. Eph.6.15. Act.14.3. & 20.32.*

If a man be alreadie converted, and in the ſtate of grace, he may receive theſe Bleſſings by it: It is a powerfull meanes of the Spirit,

The benefit of it to Converts.

To encreaſe his knowledge in heavenly things, and the affaires of the Soule; by dayly clearing his judgement from ignorance and error, by informing it with ſpirituall wiſedome, and all neceſſarie truths, and needfull knowledge.

1 It encreaſeth their knowledge.

To adde ſtrength, and vigour, and encreaſe unto his faith; that hee may grow and proceed, from the infancie and weakeneſſe in Chriſtianitie, to tallneſſe and perfection in Chriſt.

2 Their faith.

To preſerve him from luke-warmeneſſe, worldlineſſe, and ſecuritie; to recall him from his wandrings and ſtrayings out of the way of ſincerity; to ſettle, comfort, and confirme him in a godly courſe.

3 It preſerves them from luke-warmeneſſe.

To prevent his falls, and relapſes; becauſe by it hee is furniſhed with Chriſtian armour, againſt tempta-

4 It prevents relapſes.

temptations: he is reſolved in all doubts, and caſes of Conſcience; he is admoniſhed of all crooked wayes, occaſions, and down-falls to iniquity.

5 It recovers them, being fallen.

To reclaime him from back-ſlidings; to rayſe and recover him out of falls, and to reſtore him to his firſt love; by diſcovering unto him the foulneſſe and danger of ſinne, the power of his owne infirmities, the bitter root of Originall ſinne, the peſtilent and impoyſoned fruits thereof; and by dayly urging the bleſſings of true repentance, and the practice of a good Conſcience.

6 It will guide them aright in all their wayes.

Moſt abſolutely to guide and conduct him in the way of righteouſneſſe, and whole courſe of Chriſtianitie; to furniſh him with zeale and uprightneſſe in all holy duties and ſervices of God; with faithfulneſſe and conſcience, in the diſcharge and executions of his calling; with holy meditations, when he is alone; with harmleſſe behavior, and Light of good example in company, and amongſt others; with wiſdome and care, ever intirely to ſanctifie the Sabbath, and to teach and pray with his family. Marke now, I beſeech you; ſith the Miniſtery of the Word is ever graced with ſo glorious preſence, and ſuch incomparable bleſſings as I have now reckoned up unto you; he that turnes his back upon a Sermon, for the injoying of profit, pleaſures, paſtime, companie, feaſting, or any other worldly and by-reſpect; he wilfully forſakes the ſalvation of his owne ſoule, he caſts behind him all theſe happy bleſſings and comforts, tendered unto him by the Miniſtery of the Word; he throws himſelfe deſperately out of the preſence of God Almighty, Chriſt

Christ Iesus, the Holy Spirit, his blessed Angels, the congregation of Saints, into the power and clutches of Satan, into the company of wicked and prophane men, upon the just indignation and revenge of all the creatures, upon the wrath and curse of God, and the shipwracke of a good conscience. Take heed then I beseech you, how you bee drawne by any worldly affaires from the hearing of the Word, especially on the Sabbath day, lest thereby you make it plaine, that you preferre your owne particular, before the glory of God; earthly gaine, before a Crowne of immortality; a little vanishing pleasure, before the endlesse joyes of heaven; and that yee yet lie and delight in one sweet sinne or other, which keepes all saving grace out of your soules.

Let 6. Carnall conceits and objections.

A sixth let and hinderance from hearing the Word of God, are certaine prophane and unwarrantable perswasions and conceits, which are entertained and harboured in the hearts of ignorant and wilfull people.

Obiect. May we not be saved without hearing the Word preached?

Some of them thinke with themselves that there is no such great need of following Sermons, and frequenting holy assemblies, especially if at the same time they be not ungodly busied and exercised at home; and therefore they aske; What can we not save our soules, and come to heaven, unlesse we trudge and trot so often to Church? Have we not the Bible, and other good bookes at home to reade upon? Can we not pray and praise God at home?

Answ.

They might as well aske; Can wee not have a harvest

No more than wee can reape without ſowing, or live without food.

harveſt unleſſe we have a ſeed time, and raine, yea, both the former and the latter raine? Or can we not live except we have meat? Certainly no. No more can any man be truly ſanctified and ſaved, nor live either the life of grace here, or expect the life of glory hereafter, unleſſe he follow the ordinary meanes appointed and ſanctified by God for his ſalvation: Except he ſubmit himſelfe to that policy and order which God with great wiſdome hath eſtabliſhed in his Church. Would a man be taken for a good ſubject, who ſhould peeviſhly oppoſe himſelfe againſt a law agreed upon and commanded by the King and State, for the great good of the Common-wealth? God himſelfe hath appointed a publike Miniſtery in the Church; Paſtors and teachers for the gathering of the Saints, and all that belong to life; and is it fit that any private exerciſe ſhould croſſe Gods publike ordinances? No; It is both inconvenient and wicked, and Gods bleſſing is never to be looked for, upon any action and exerciſe, though never ſo good in it ſelfe, if his will be not obeyed.

Similit.

Eph 4 11,12.

Obiect. 2. Frequent preaching is not ſo neceſſary.

I, but ſome will ſay; It is good indeed ſometimes now and then to heare a Sermon; but what needs ſo much preaching, and Sermon upon Sermon; Would they have us Saints and Angels upon earth?

Anſw. It is a ſigne of a graceleſſe heart to loath the heavenly Manna.

Wretched is that man which is weary of the Word of life. And hee hath no true taſte of holy things, which loaths this ſpirituall Manna, though never ſo often reigned from heaven. There

is

is no saving and true knowledge of God in that man, who desires not to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Iesus Christ. Would we not thinke him mad and distracted that should thus reason against his owne life? I hope I have eaten meat enough heretofore, and furnished my selfe with sufficient strength, so that I now need no more, and therefore I will neither eat nor drink more while I live. Even just so doth he reason and plead against the life of his soule, who complaines of too much preaching, and too many Sermons. *David*, that blessed King, and holy Prophet, who was advanced both in knowledge and holinesse, above the ordinary reach and perfection of men, and lived as an Angell upon earth; yet he acknowledgeth himselfe greatly to stand in need of stirring up, by meanes ordained of God for that end. As we may gather out of *Psal.* 84. and in many other places. In that Psalme he makes a most grievous and mournfull complaint, that he is debarred and banished from all accesse unto the publike worship and service of God; holding himselfe in this respect more miserable than some of the bruit creatures, which had liberty to build their nests, and lay their young neare the Altars of the Lord; which benefit he could not now enjoy. Now if this man of God so longed and laboured after the meanes of grace and comfort, what ought those to doe, who are of little or no faith; who are but Novices and petties in the Schoole of Christ; who are but babes in Christianity, or utterly without grace?

Simile.

Psal. 84.

I,

Obiect. 3. Our fore-fathers had no preaching, yet are ſaved.

I, but our fore-fathers (will others ſay) were never troubled with ſo many Sermons, and yet we hope they are well, and in Heaven.

Anſw. Their condemnation ſhall be eaſier.

Our fore-fathers wanted the meanes, and that full glorious Noone-tide of the Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, which we by the grace and mercy of God enjoy. And therefore whoſoever of them periſhed without them, ſhall certainly be beaten with fewer ſtripes, than thoſe that ſhut their eyes againſt the faire and bleſſed Sun-ſhine of Gods holy truth, which is ſhed round about us, and *if it be hid, it is hid onely to thoſe that periſh, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their minde.* Beſides, if it ſo pleaſed the Lord in his juſt and ſecret judgement to ſuffer ſome of our fore-fathers to live and die under the tyranny and darkneſſe of Antichriſt; how much are we bound to bleſſe God, that we are borne and brought up in the light of the Goſpell; and what heavie plagues and great damnation doe wee bring upon our ſelves, if wee neglect or deſpiſe ſo great ſalvation.

2 Cor 4 3,4.

2 We are bound to bleſſe God, who hath dealt more graciouſly with us.

Obiect. 4.

I, but yet further, (will ſome ſay) wee have lived ſome of us fortie, ſome thirtie, ſome twenty yeares, without ſo much preaching, and yet have holden good credit and reputation in the world, and proſpered in our wayes, would you now have us ſo forward in running to Sermons?

Anſw.

Strange it is to ſee how wiſe the ſimpleſt are in matters of the world, about their temporall ſtate, but how ſimple and blinde the wiſeſt worldlings are in the affaires of Heaven, and about their greateſt

greateſt, ſpirituall, and eternall good. Let us ſuppoſe a man to have lived long in a poore Cottage, and now at length to have ſome great and rich Lordſhip befallen him; doe you thinke hee would reaſon thus: Why, I have lived ſome thirtie or fortie yeeres now alreadie in this low eſtate with good contentment, and credit, amongſt my neighbours; and therefore here I will reſt, the reſt of my dayes; I am too old now, to change my former eſtate? Would ſuch a foole as this, be found in a whole Countrey? And yet many Countries are full of ſuch fooles, in reſpect of ſpirituall advancement, and the ſalvation of their ſoules. Me thinkes, thoſe that have long lived in ignorance, and blindneſſe, ſhould rather conclude thus: Have I thus long and ſo fearefully lived without God in the World, without knowledge of his Truth, faith in Chriſt, and Conſcience of my wayes? Oh, then it is more than high time now at length to awake out of ſleepe, and to open mine eyes, and to imbrace this glorious Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, which the Lord of his great mercy hath brought unto me, that ſo I may be enlightened to eternall life.

As for proſpering in the World, that is no marke of a good ſoule; nay, it is commonly the Let of the wicked, not to be plagued like other men, but to bring their enterpriſes to paſſe, *Pſalme* 73. Nay, yet further: There is no greater Curſe can befall any man, than to proſper in the World, and be out of the way to Heaven.

I, but (will others ſay) to the attaining of eternall *Obiect.* 5.

What needs ſo much adoe? The whole dutie of man is ſoone learned.

life, what needs ſo much adoe, ſo much preaching, catechiſing, expounding, conferring, meditating, teaching and praying with our families, which are ſo much and ſo often urged upon us? When all comes to all, this is the ſumme and end of all; *To feare God, and keepe his Commandements; That we love God above all, and our neighbour as our ſelves:* And we hope we can doe this, without all this adoe.

Anſw. It is ſoone ſaid, not ſo ſoone done. *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Matth.* 22. 40.

To feare God, and keepe his Commandements, (which is the whole dutie of man, as the Preacher ſpeakes in his laſt chapter) and to love God above all, and our neighbors as our ſelves; (*upon which hangeth the whole Law and the Prophets*, as Chriſt tells us, *Matth.* 22.) are indeed ſoone ſpoken, but not ſo eaſily, truly learned; and moſt hardly, ſincerely practiſed. Is it enough, thinke you, to make a man a good Carpenter, or Maſon, to ſay; That, that is ſoone learned; and, I know as much as the beſt workman can teach or tell me: To build an Houſe, is nothing but to lay the foundation, to reare the walls, and cover it with a Rooſe? Is it enough to make a good Husbandman, to ſay; I know as much as the beſt Husbandman can teach me; for Husbandry is nothing elſe, but to ſowe and reape? Is it enough to make a good Preacher, to ſay; It is no ſuch great matter, to make a Sermon; I know as much in that point, as the beſt Scholler amongſt them can tell me: To preach, is nothing elſe but to expound the Text, gather Doctrines, and make uſe and application to the hearts & conſciences of the hearers? But it would be long before theſe idle and emptie vaunts would build Houſes, fill Barnes, or ſave

Simile.

Simile.

Simile.

ſave Soules. There is farre more required to theſe buſineſſes, than ſo: There is to be undergone much toile and labour, much care & trouble, expence and exerciſe, before any of theſe workes can be rightly accompliſhed. It is even ſo in the great worke of ſalvation, and the attainment of Heaven. The ſtate of grace, and trade of Chriſtianitie, is not ſo eaſily purchaſed & practiſed. There goes more to ſaving of a ſoule, than bold & ignorant brags: than to ſay; If that be all, I hope I can quickly and eaſily learne to love God above all, & my neighbor as my ſelfe: For before theſe, there goes many things; as, knowledge of Gods will, and Word; a thorow view of our owne miſery & corruptions, in the glaſſe of the Law; ſtrange agonies, and ſore pangs in the new-birth, and ſorrow for ſinne, refreſhings and coolings by the mercies of God, and merits of Chriſt; faith, repentance, ſanctification, a bleſſed & holy change in the whole man, both body, ſoule, and ſpirit. And then follows new obedience; which conſiſts in the uprightneſſe and ſinceritie of our owne hearts; a conſcionable and charitable carriage towards our neighbors, and a zealous conſtancy in all religious duties and right ſervice of God: which muſt be univerſall, in reſpect of the object; that is, we muſt walk in all his Commandements: totall, in reſpect of the ſubject; that is, we muſt ſerve him in all the powers of our ſoule, and parts of our body; in our thoughts, words, and actions: In all which things, and holy courſes, if a man be not particularly inſtructed, experienced, & practiſed, his love of God and his neighbour is but in word and tongue, not

Things required, before a man can love God or man.

How our ſervice to God muſt be qualified.

in deed and truth. A man, if he be disposed, may quickly perceive and discerne the truth or hollownesse of his heart in this point. God hath straitly commanded an entire sanctification and keeping holy of the Sabbath. Let a man then consider, if he suffer himselfe to be drawne away from holy Exercise on that day, by pleasures, profit, pastime, companie, ease, idlenesse, or other worldly occasions; why, then he preferres meere vanities, and the desires of his owne heart, before the glory and honour of God, and so doth not love God above all. The true love of a mans selfe, doth chiefly & principally consist in furnishing himselfe with saving knowledge, sinceritie of heart, godlinesse of life, a good Conscience, and spirituall comfort, against hee come to Iudgement. Now, if hee love his neighbour as himselfe, he is not still talking with him of worldly matters; but especially labours with him for his conversion, entertainment of grace, and encrease in godlinesse. If these be not his cares, both for himselfe and his neighbour, he truly loves neither. Thus may a man examine himselfe through all the Commandements in particular; and see, whether it be so easie to love his neighbour as himselfe, and God above all.

A triall of our love to God.

A triall of our love to our neighbour.

Obiect. 6. Tumults and divisions, disquietnesse and discontentment accompanies your preaching.

I, but where there is so much preaching, there is much disquietnesse and discontentment: for men are abridged of their former ancient pastimes, and pleasures, and urged unto more strictnesse of life. When as all was well before, in much quietnesse and peace, the preaching of the Word breeds new stirres and contrary affections in men.

No

No marvell, though there be much ſtruggling and ſtriving, great noyſe and ſtirre, before the *ſtrong man* in the Goſpel can be diſ-armed and diſpoſſeſſed of his Holds; that is, before Sathan, having long reigned in the hearts, and ſat in the Conſciences of ignorant and prophane men, will be caſt out, by the Preaching and Power of the Word. This conqueſt coſts full deare; it will not be had, without the loſſe of our deareſt delights; without ſhedding the very hearts-bloud of our beloved and boſome-ſinne; which fleſh and bloud will not yeeld unto, without blowes and bloud-ſhed. You may aſſure your ſelfe, where the Light of Gods Truth begins once to peepe out, and the power of grace to worke, for the driving away darkneſſe, and ſubduing prophaneneſſe; you ſhall be ſure ever there to have three fierce and implacable enemies, and oppoſites, to ſtart up; Sathan, wicked men, and a mans owne corruptions. While men lye in ſinne, ignorance, and under the ſhadow of death, Sathan lets them alone, meddles not much with them, never troubles or diſquiets them, but procures them all temporall happineſſe, and carnall contentments, that can be; (for he knowes full well, if they ſo continue, they are ſure his owne, and children of endleſſe perdition:) But if once, by the power of the Word, they be enlarged out of the ſlaverie of ſinne and death, and lay hold upon ſalvation, and the glorious libertie of the Saints; why then he begins to beſtirre himſelfe like a madded & enraged Lion, and labors with all his malice and policie to hinder and daſh ſuch proceedings.

Anſw. There is good reaſon for it. *Luke* 11. 21, 22.

Sathan hinders the Word.

So doe wicked men,

And a mans owne corruptions.

And in this Conſpiracie, hee joynes unto himſelfe wicked and reprobate men, to rayle, revile, and rage againſt ſinceritie: I, and beſides, a mans owne corruption, and ſinfull fleſh, doth fret and fume, when it feeles it ſelfe curbed and ſnaffled by the Law of the Spirit.

Epheſ. 6. 15.

The Goſpel indeed is a *Goſpel of Peace*: But of what Peace? Of Peace with God, with good men, and a mans owne Conſcience; of the *Peace that paſſeth all underſtanding*: But it ever proclaimes open warre againſt wickedneſſe, prophaneneſſe, and corruptions; it will have no peace with impietie, carnall ſecuritie, and rebellion unto the Lawes of God. Hence it is, that our Saviour tells us in the Goſpel, that *he came not to ſend Peace into the Earth*; but rather, Fire, Debate, and the Sword: that is, Whereſoever his Word is publiſhed powerfully, and conſcionably, with fruit and effect upon the ſoules of his elect; there, by accident (as they ſay) it ſtirres up much rage and bitter oppoſition againſt Gods children. For, as there is no true inward peace unto the wicked; ſo, in this World, there is no outward peace unto the righteous: but commonly they are ſtill exerciſed with one croſſe and temptation, or other; either the Devill, or wicked men, are ſtill plotting or practiſing miſchiefe and miſerie againſt them.

Luke 12. 49. *Matth.* 10. 34. *Luke* 12. 51.

Iſa. 42. 28.

The Goſpel is not the cauſe of troubles, but mens corruptions.

But you muſt conceive, that the diſquietneſſes and troubles that ariſe at the preaching of the Word, are not cauſed by it, but by mens corruptions. Would any man thinke, that Saint *Paul*,

or

or his Preaching, were in fault, becauſe there was much adoe, and an hurly-burly almoſt whereſoever he came; and not rather the wicked Infidels, which could not endure to have their ſinnes reproved? Neither the Sower, nor the Seed, *Math.* 13. are to be blamed, that it doth not proſper and fructifie; it is the ground that is onely in fault: which is either ſtonie, or thornie, or barren; or elſe, it is the envious man, that ſoweth Tares: The Sower doth onely his dutie, and the Seed is pure and precious; it is mens corruptions, and prophane hearts, that cauſeth all the ſtirre. Amongſt foure kinds of Grounds, there is but one at the moſt (as appeares in the Parable of the Sower, *Math.* 13.) in which the immortall Seed of the Word takes root, proſpers, and fructifies: Onely the good and honeſt heart profits by Preaching; to all others, it is the *ſavour of death unto death:* And whom it doth not humble, it hardneth; whom it makes not ſo meeke as a Lambe, and like a little Child in humilitie, it makes as fierce and furious as a Lion, againſt the power of grace wrought in others, and againſt the profeſſion and practice of ſinceritie. No marvell then, though where the Word of Truth begins to beare ſway, there be many times much adoe, and reſiſtance by carnall and prophane men.

Math. 13. 4, 5, 7, 11.

I, but (will ſome ſay) this Word is brought unto us by weake and fraile men; ſometimes by thoſe, who are of notorious and infamous life and converſation: and therefore wee have leſſe heart to beleeve and obey them. If wee had the Word

Object. 7. The Word is brought to us by weak, ſometimes by wicked men.

publiſhed by an Angel, or an Apoſtle, or ſome more excellent and powerfull meanes, and Embaſſadours, wee ſhould more eaſily and willingly heare, beleeve, and obey them.

Anſw. 1. It is Gods goodneſſe, to ſpeake to us by men, like to our ſelves.

It is Gods great mercie unto us, that it pleaſeth him ſo farre to condiſcend to our infirmitie, as to open unto us the rich Treaſures of his heavenly Word, by men of the ſame condition and frailtie, and ſubject to the ſame paſſions with our ſelves. Hee might by terrible and aſtoniſhing Voices, out of Lightnings, Thunders, and Earthquakes, able to breake the hardeſt Rocks, and ſtony Mountaines, (as he did in the giving of the Law) force us to obedience: Or he might ſend his Angels, armed with power and puiſſance, to execute preſent vengeance upon all thoſe which doe not preſently ſubmit themſelves to the Scepter of his Chriſt, and Soveraigntie of his Word. But in great mercie and compaſſion unto us, hee chuſeth rather to teach us by a ſtill and ſoft Voice; by a more faire, familiar, and fit inſtruction for us; even by ſuch as our ſelves, of our owne nature, frailtie, and condition.

Exod. 20. 19.

2. It is his love ſo to honour mankind, as to make men his Embaſſadours.

Herein he ſhewes his great love unto us, in that he vouchſafeth to put his fearefull and glorious Word into the mouth of a mortall and ſinfull man. What an honour and advancement is it unto mans nature, unto mankind, that the high and mightie God of Heaven and Earth ſhould ſingle them out for ſo glorious a ſervice; ſanctifie their Tongues, to deliver his good pleaſure, and newes of ſalvation unto the ſonnes of men?

That

That hee ſhould acquaint and put them in truſt with ſuch high myſteries, and heavenly matters, of ſo ſoveraigne and ſaving uſe, both to themſelves and others? 1 *Tim* 4 16.

But it may be, beſides common frailtie and infirmitie, the Miniſter and Meſſenger of the Word is of lewd and prophane life, and condition.

If he be, more is the pitty; the ſcandall of the Miniſterie is the greater, and his owne damnation more ſmarting and terrible. See *Pſal.* 50. 16, 17, &c. But notwithſtanding, the prophaneneſſe of the Preacher is no priviledge to the hearer, either of negligence or diſobedience. *He that turnes his eare from hearing of the Law truly preached* (though by a Phariſe) *even his prayer is abominable, Prov.* 28. 9. *Hee that deſpiſeth the Word, ſhall be deſtroyed, Prov.* 13. 13. *Hee that obeyeth not the Sonne*, in his Miniſters lawfully ſent, though not ſanctified themſelves, *ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Chriſt himſelfe, in the Goſpel, bids his followers to obſerve and doe whatſoever they were bid by the Scribes and Phariſes, which ſate in *Moſes Chaire*; but not to doe after their works; for they ſaid, and did not. Every Miniſter is to be heard, received, and followed, ſo farre as he followes and delivers to the Church the Truth of God, and Doctrine of the Apoſtles. For therein he is an *Angel of the Lord of Hoſts*, and *Embaſſadour in the ſtead of Chriſt.* And all the parts of the Miniſterie in his hand (he following the Word) ſhall as certainely be accompliſhed, as if an Angel, or Chriſt

The Miniſters prophaneneſſe is no priviledge of diſobedience to the Word. *Prov.* 28. 9.

Prov. 13. 13.

Iohn 3. 36.

Matth. 23. 2, 3.

Mal. 2. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.

Chriſt from Heaven ſhould preſently and potently execute them. If hee denounce Iudgements againſt ſinne, it is as if the voice of God himſelfe ſhould be heard from Heaven; as if the Lion of the Tribe of Iudah ſhould roare. If he poure the Oyle of comfort into a wounded and diſtreſſed Conſcience, it is as ſure and certaine, as ſoft and ſweet to the beleeving ſoule, as if the Angels ſhould comfort him, as they did Chriſt in his Agonie; or, as if Chriſt himſelfe ſhould mercifully reach out his glorious hand, through the Clouds, and binde up his broken heart and bruiſed Conſcience with a Plaiſter of his owne precious Bloud. If hee inſtruct, admoniſh, reprove, exhort, perſwade, from ground and warrant out of the Word; it is all one, as if Chriſt himſelfe ſhould doe it: who hath ſaid; *He that heareth you, heareth me.*

See *Eccluſ.* 37. 18.

Luke 22. 43.

Luke 10. 16.

Let men therefore pretend what they will; if they will not heare, beleeve, and obey the Lord, ſpeaking in the Miniſterie of the Word, though the meanes and Meſſengers be never ſo baſe and vile, fraile, weake, and ſinfull. Let an Angel come from Heaven, a Devill from Hell, or a man from the dead; yet would they not beleeve. For, if a man were truly humbled, hee would tremble at Gods Word, of whomſoever hee heard it. If hee had a ſpirituall taſte, hee would reliſh the heavenly food, whoſoever miniſtred it. If hee had Gods holy Spirit, hee would know and acknowledge his Sword, which is the Word of God, in whoſe hand ſoever he ſaw it. And untill he have this

this ſpirit, a ſpirituall taſte, and an humble heart, hee will not beleeve, eſpecially with effect, fruit, and practice, let him pretend whatſoever he will; neither Angels, nor men; dead, nor living; *Moſes*, nor the Prophets; *Peter*, nor *Paul*; not Chriſt, nor God himſelfe; if the one were living againe upon Earth, or the other would be pleaſed, or it were poſſible, to ſpeake immediately to him.

For concluſion of this Point, let us know, That the Miniſterie of the Word is Gods Ordinance; which dependeth not upon the worthineſſe of him who delivereth it; neither is it made void and uneffectuall, by his weakeneſſe and wickedneſſe: but it hath it vertue, force, and power from the bleſſing of God, and from the inward operation of his Spirit; who applyeth it to the hearts and conſciences of men, and thereby illuminates their underſtandings, begetteth faith in them, and all ſanctifying and ſaving graces.

See *Downam: C. H. pag. 362.*

I, but (will ſome ſay) it is a very wearieſome, tyring, and tedious thing, to be tyed to the hearing of ſo many Sermons, to meditate of them, conferre of them with our neighbours, teach them our families, and practiſe them; which are urged upon us, as neceſſarie Chriſtian duties.

Obiect. 8. This courſe is wearieſome.

It is a ſtrange thing, and ſore caſe, that ſome men will not be perſwaded to take halfe ſo much paines to goe to Heaven, and eternall Reſt, as many thouſands to goe to Hell, and everlaſting torment. How many tyre and torture themſelves with carke and care, with much toyle and travell, to heape up thoſe riches, which in the meane time are

Anſw. Many will not take ſuch paines to goe to Heaven, as others doe to goe to Hell.

are matter of much vexation unto them; and hereafter will be witneſſes againſt them, and eate their fleſh as it were fire, as *Iames* ſpeakes? How many ſpend their wits, their ſpirits, their time, that they may become ſome-body in the World, and climbe by indirect and unlawfull meanes, and ſteps unto thoſe high places, from whence hereafter they muſt be hurled with greater confuſion, and a more fearefull downe-fall, into the Pit of Hell? How many waſte their wealth, weaken their ſtrength, conſume their marrow, fill their bones with rottenneſſe, and their bodies with diſeaſes, with luſt and uncleanneſſe, with following the *Whoriſh woman, whoſe paths lead unto the dead*; with tarrying long at the Wine, and pouring in of ſtrong Drinke: for which, at length, they ſhall be ſure to be filled with drunkenneſſe, and with ſorrow, even with the Cup of deſtruction, and trembling; they ſhall drinke of it deepe and large, and wring it out to the dregges? How unwearied have Idolaters ever beene in the wicked worſhip of their falſe gods? And many Heretikes, in the falſe worſhip of the true God? In thruſting towards Hell, they neither ſpared coſt, nor charge; loſſe, nor labour: They have beene prodigall both of lives, and living; of bloud, and children. You know, amongſt the Iewes, ſome mingled the rufull cryes of their deareſt children with Muſicke and melodie, leſt they ſhould be moved to compaſſion, while they were caſt into the fire, to be burned up in ſacrifice unto the Idoll *Moloch*. Scribes and Phariſes compaſſe Sea and Land,

Iam. 5. 3.

Prov. 2. 18.

Mat. 23. 15.

Land, to make a Proſelyte. *Baals* Prieſts lanced and cut their fleſh before their Idoll, untill the bloud guſhed out. The blinded Papiſts at this day whip themſelves, waſte their goods, and conſume their bodies with wearieſome Pilgrimages, to ſee ſome counterfeit Reliques, and rotten Bones, or to viſit accurſed Idols, and Popiſh Saints: Nay, ſome of them tranſported with a more bloudie rage, and furious ſpirit of Antichriſt, ſuffer as it were with ſenſeleſneſſe, with deſperate and damned boldneſſe, moſt horrible and exquiſite torments, for butchering of Kings; for which they hope to merit Heaven, and to ſayle through a Sea of Royall bloud to the Haven of endleſſe reſt; though indeed and truth, they juſtly light ſhort, and ſinke, before they are aware, into the deepeſt Lake of the hotteſt fire, and moſt conſuming flame of Hell. Now, I pray you, ſhall theſe ſervices of Sathan be followed and purſued with ſuch heat and eagerneſſe, with ſuch paines and patiencie of all miſeries and vexations; and ſhall not the Lords owne Ordinances, and the true worſhip of the true God have power to make us ſtep out of our doores with patience, and pleaſure, to heare the Lords will revealed unto us, to receive ſalvation to our ſoules, and a Crowne of immortalitie to our heads? Can ſome be content to toyle day after day, fare hard, breake their ſleepe, eate the Bread of carefulneſſe, and all to heape up a little wealth, perhaps, with the loſſe of their owne ſoules, and ſometimes they ſcarce know for whom; and ſhall not wee with joy and

1 *King.* 18. 28.

chearefulneſſe paſſe through holy Exerciſes, for the enriching of our ſoules, wherein true and laſting comfort is onely to be found, and whereby we may lay up for our ſelves Treaſures in Heaven, durable Riches, a Bag that cannot wax old, a Treaſure that can never faile, *Prov.* 8. 18. *Luk.* 12. 33. unmixed joyes, endleſſe peace, and bleſſed immortalitie, preſently to be entred upon after death, and then to be enjoyed for ever and ever? Shall rebellious Superſtition, and the Doctrine of Devils, and killing Kings, harden the Papiſts againſt any croſſes, and tortures; and ſhall we be tyred with the peaceable Exerciſes of ſound & ſaving Religion? God forbid. In whomſoever the true love of God and Chriſt hath taken up the heart, there their Goſpel, and Word, and ſervices are ſweeter and more taſtfull than all outward delights. Little touch of Religion, or ſenſe of Salvation hath hee, that comes unto with unchearefulneſſe, and ſtayes with wearineſſe at the Miniſterie of the Word.

Object. 9. There was never good world ſince preaching came in.

I, but (will ſome ſay) it was never good World ſince ſo much preaching came amongſt us; when there was leſſe preaching, there was more plentie: and therefore, it ſeemes, there is little good in it. Since this new Religion was on foot, (for ſo ſome ignorantly and maliciouſly call it, though it be as old as God himſelfe, whoſe eternall Truth it is; as old as the Patriarks and Prophets, as Chriſt and his Apoſtles) there hath beene (ſay they) more ſcarcitie of all things, more Plagues, Famines, ſtrange apparitions, extremitie of ſeaſons, and other Iudgements, than ever our fore-fathers ſaw,

ſaw, or heard of. Hoſpitalitie, Charitie, Paſtimes, and Plentie were baniſhed with the old Religion; for ſo they call the bloudie and idolatrous Hereſie of Poperie.

Anſw. This hath alwayes beene the complaint of Idolaters.

This hath ever beene the complaint of Idolaters, and the wicked, againſt the Truth of God; as it is now of the Papiſts & prophane men amongſt us, againſt the glorious Light of the Goſpel, that ſhines round about us. When *Ieremy, chap.* 44. had reproved the Iewes, and denounced Gods Iudgements againſt them for their Idolatry, they anſwer him thus, in *verſ.* 16. * *The word that thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not heare it of thee; but we will doe whatſoever thing goeth out of our mouth: as, to burne incenſe to the Queene of Heaven, and to poure out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, both we and our fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Iudah, and in the ſtreetes of Ieruſalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and felt no evill. But ſince we left off to burne incenſe to the Queene of Heaven, and to poure out drink-offerings unto her, we have had ſcarceneſſe of all things, and have bin conſumed by the ſword, and by the famine.* The very ſame complaint was made of the wicked Heathens and Infidels, at the firſt plantation of Chriſtian Religion among the Gentiles. * *Tertullian*, an ancient Father, tells us in his time; If there were any inundation and overflowing of Tibris, a great River in Rome; if there were any extraordinarie and uncouth Hayle, or Froſt, or any other miſerie or calamitie; all the fault was preſently laid on Chriſt, and the Chriſtian Religion.

* Marke that, I beſeech you; for it is the very language of the Papiſts at this day. *Jer.* 44. 16.

* *Apologetico. Vid. Calv. in Ier.* 330.

It

Auſtin, Epiſt. 122.

It appeares alſo by *Auſtin*, another ancient Father, in his 122. Epiſtle, that there were wicked complaints and murmurings againſt the Chriſtian Faith, in his time; the Infidels were ſtill crying, that before the Doctrine of Chriſt was publiſhed to the World, mankind was not vexed and diſtreſſed with ſo many troubles and garboyles. To which, the good Father doth there excellently anſwer; Out of *Luke* 12. 47, 48. eaſily, ſaith he, may they thence take their anſwer: *The ſervant that knew not his Maſters will, and yet did commit things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes; but he that knew his Maſters will, and prepared not himſelfe, neither did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.*

Luke 12. 47, 48.

Our Times deſerve greater judgement, than the former Times of ignorance, for three reaſons.

Hence then may wee clearely ſee the reaſon why our Times, in all reaſon, ſhould be more viſited with Iudgements, than former dayes of ignorance.

John 3. 19, 20.

1 *Becauſe that the Light of the Goſpel is come amongſt us; and many love Darkneſſe rather than* that *Light, becauſe their deeds are evill: for every man that doth evill, hateth the Light, neither commeth to the Light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.*

2 Becauſe the Goſpel is not ſo thankefully received and entertained, as ſo excellent a Bleſſing and precious a Treaſure ought to be.

3 Many that heare it, live not after it: Perhaps, onely make a ſhew of godlineſſe; but deny the power thereof, in their lives and converſations. So, that negligence and diſobedience to the Word of God, is the true cauſe of thoſe Iudgements

ments

ments and miſeries, which are wickedly & wrongfully pretended to bee a cauſe why they have ſo little care to attend and obey it.

As for Hoſpitality in the time of Popery, it did not ſo much ſpring from the truth of Religion, as

Popiſh Hoſpitality, upon what grounds.

1. From a ſuperſtitious opinion of redeeming their ſinnes, and purchaſing Heaven by almes-deeds.

2. From an exceſſive cheapneſſe of all things, by reaſon of the ſcarcity of money.

3. From the ſuperfluitie of the wealth, riches, lands and impropriations, the price of the bloud of ſoules, which Monaſteries, and other religious, or rather ſuperſtitious houſes, had immeaſurably and unconſcionably ingroſſed and got into their hands. And when they had ingroſſed the world to themſelves, (as one ſayes) they ſeemed liberall in giving ſomething; like unto ſome vaine-glorious theeves, which having robbed wealthy Merchants, beſtow ſome pence upon beggers.

Simile.

As for works of Charity: Certaine it is, and a reverend and learned man of our Church hath proved it, and it will more clearly appeare hereafter; *That the charitable benevolence, bountifull liberalitie, large expences in building and enlarging Colledges, and erecting Hoſpitals, Libraries, Free-ſchooles, and many other works of charity, and fruits of faith, ſince the light of the Goſpell began to ſhine amongſt us, may compare with, if not farre excell any time of the like or longer continuance in any age.*

Our times may compare with any for works of charity.

As for greater dearth & higher price of all things

The reaſons of the higher price of things now.

now, than in former times, it is a cleare and plaine caſe, that the reaſon is; that the great ſtore and plentie of treaſure which is walking in theſe parts of the world, farre more in theſe our dayes, than ever our forefathers have ſeene in times paſt. Who doth not underſtand of the infinite ſummes of Gold and Silver which are gathered from the Indies, and other Countries, and ſo yearly tranſported into theſe coaſts? And this is confeſt to be the true cauſe of the ſame unancient dearneſſe of all things, even in other Kingdomes alſo, where Popery is profeſſed. *One* Bodin, *a great Polititian of France*, tels us, *that the common people are much deceived, who thinke that the price of Corne, Cattell, and other neceſſaries, ſhould hold the ſame rate it did of old. They doe not underſtand and conſider, that the price of things is more by ten parts* (ſaith he) *than it was anciently, by reaſon of the plenty and abundance of Gold and Silver, which is brought out of the Weſt Indies into Europe, whereby it comes to paſſe that money is leſſe eſteemed, for plenty of any thing leſſens the eſtimation of it.*

De Rep. lib. 6. cap. 2.

Beſides, for our owne Countrey, wiſe men have obſerved another particular reaſon. For (ſay they) immediately after our coine, in the time of King *Henry* the eighth, the prices of all things generally among all ſorts of people roſe; for that they thinke, that the alteration of the Coine was the chiefe and principall cauſe of an univerſall dearneſſe of things. And why our Engliſh Coine being reſtored by our late Queene, that bleſſed Saint of glorious memory, to its former purity

and

and perfection, the prices of all things fall not backe to their old rate, they give sufficient reasons.

As for pastimes, Playes, and other fearefull prophanation of the Sabbath, it is a good signe the power of grace is there planted by the Word, from whence they are banished and abandoned. They are fit pleasures for Papists, which have no comfort in the joyes above; and well agreeing to the darkenesse of superstition. But the light of the Gospell dispels such vanities, and Gods children have all their pleasures in holy exercises upon the Sabbath day.

This last objection then of Papists and prophane men; That the world is worse since there was so much preaching, is idle, vaine, and frivolous.

Many such like conceits, perswasions and objections as these, which I have now reckoned up unto you, there are abroad in the world, and in the hearts of prophane men, by which they are hindred from hearing the Word of God, with that heart, zeale and diligence as they ought.

Satans sleights to hinder the effectuall working of the Word.

Now I come to acquaint you with some slights and temptations of Satan, whereby he labours to bereave us of the blessings and benefits of profitable hearers, and to hinder the effectuall working of the Word in our consciences and conversations.

He would keep them from the Word.

A first plot and practice of Satan, is to keepe men from diligent hearing the Word; If he cannot that way prevaile, in a second place he labours

Or elſe hinder the power of it

to make the Word in vaine, fruitleſſe, and unprofitable unto them. And that hee doth, by ſuch meanes as theſe:

Hee keepes them from attending.

1 If by the grace of God we breake thorow all lets and ſnares which might withhold us from holy aſſemblies, and hearing of the Word; then Satan, that he might make it uneffectuall for our converſion and ſalvation; firſt, labours to worke in us a negligent careleſneſſe and heedleſneſſe, in liſtning to thoſe things which are delivered, and that by a kinde of heartleſneſſe in holy things, by dulneſſe of ſpirit, drowſineſſe, ſleepineſſe, gazing about, talking, or ſuch like. And ſuch hearers as theſe, are never a whit moved or affected with the Word preached, but remaine in the ſame ſtate as they were before. There is neither paſſion or impreſſion wrought upon them for the preſent, nor any thought of it, profit or practice afterward.

* In this depth he uſes to fill our minds with barren melancholy, or to make men poſt off reproofes, and apply them Phariſaically all the while to others. He fills our minds either with worldly, or elſe with impertinent unſeaſonable thoughts.

2 * But if he cannot ſpeed this way, but that we rouze up and addreſſe our ſelves to heare the Word of God, as deſiring with care and good conſcience to profit thereby: Why then, in a ſecond place, hee ſeekes by all meanes to fill our heads and hearts with idle muſings, and wandring thoughts, which may diſtract and ſteale away our minds from attending to the Word. And that he doth, either by offering and ſuggeſting to our conſideration and memory, the world, and the vanities thereof, as our affaires and buſineſſe, our profits and preferments; thoſe pleaſures and delights wherein our corrupt affections finde moſt

moſt ſenſuall ſweetneſſe: Or, if this will not prevaile; by caſting into our mindes very craftily and cunningly, things which in their owne nature may be good, honeſt, and religious: But becauſe they are thought upon out of due and convenient time, they deprive us of the profit of the preſent holy Exerciſe; which ought for the time, onely and wholly to take up our mindes.

3 If this yet will doe no good; but that wee marke diligently and attentively, all the while, what the Miniſter delivers unto us from God, for our good: why then, in a third place;

Some underſtand not what they heare.

1 In ſome, he makes it uneffectuall, by nouriſhing in them a neglect of reading the Scriptures, and ignorance in the Principles of Religion: ſo that though they attend never ſo well, and ſtare the Miniſter in the face; yet they underſtand not the Sermons they heare. Let the younger ſort therefore, to prevent this miſchiefe, acquaint themſelves with the Scriptures from their youth; by the example of *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Salomon*, *Prov.* 31. 1, *&c.* *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 24. See alſo *Pſal.* 119. *Prov.* 2. 1. And let the miſerie upon *Elies* Houſe, terrifie negligent and indulgent Parents; ſee 1 *Sam.* 2. 1, 2. *&c.* In this depth, the Word is either buried as it is brought forth, or dies at the Church doore.

In others, Sathan ſtealeth it away immediately.

2 In others, he earneſtly endeavours utterly to extinguiſh and aboliſh all thought of it; quite to drive and baniſh it out of their heads, ſo ſoone as they have heard it. And that thus: If mens hearts be hardned through unbeleefe, or cuſtome

in ſinning, and like the High-way in the Parable of the Sower; then the Evill one comes immediately, and catcheth the Seed of the Word ſo ſoone as it is ſowen, and ſtealeth it out of the heart. As we may ſee many times Birds hovering greedily after the Sower, to ſnatch away the Corne, before it be covered with Earth, or take root in the ground: even ſo Sathan, the ravenous Crow of Hell, waites all opportunities to pecke up the Seed of the Word out of the hearts of men, before it ſinke into their affections, or fructifie in their converſations. Or otherwiſe, if the World hath ſtolne mens hearts out of their bodies, ſo that they have no hearts left within them, for matters of Holineſſe, and Heaven; but are wholly ſet upon Gaine, and exerciſed in Covetouſneſſe: then needes not Sathan much to beſtirre himſelfe; he knowes full well, that worldly Cares will preſently choake the Seed of the Word. As ſoone as the Sermon is heard, and ended, and they turned their backes upon the Church, there comes immediately into their heads whole ſwarmes of earthly thoughts, and they are preſently plunged over head and eares into the cares and plottings of earthly buſineſſes. So that theſe men, whom Sathan conquers by this temptation, never meddle with meditation, conference, or talke about the points handled by the Preacher, by which the Word of God ſhould be better, as it were, digeſted, and prepared for practiſe. Nay, they have no delight at all to heare others repeat the Sermon; but are very wearie of the

Simile.

Or the World ſteales away their hearts.

Mat. 4. 19.

the place and companie, and never pleaſed, untill they bring them back againe unto talke of worldly matters and prophane diſcourſes.

If this yet will not ſerve the turne, but that the Word gets within a man, and workes upon his underſtanding; ſo that by his diligent hearing of it, meditation, and conference, he furniſhes himſelfe with competent knowledge in the Booke of God, and Divine Truth: why then, Sathan caſts about another way; which is, to make him to content himſelfe with a bare fruitleſſe knowledge, without practiſing the power of it in his life and actions; to reſt contented with an abilitie to talke and diſcourſe onely upon points of Religion, and places of Scripture, without inward ſanctification, and ſubduing the will and affections to new obedience, and ſincere exerciſe of Chriſtianitie. So that, for all his knowledge, he neither meddles with Converſion, nor mends in his Converſation.

4 He labours to keepe them from practiſing what they know.

He labours here, firſt, to hinder his Converſion, by planting in his heart a prejudice and diſconceit againſt,

1 He would hinder their converſion ſundry wayes.

1 Preaching the Law.

2 Diſtinguiſhing ſeverall eſtates of unregenerate men, *Math.* 13. the three Reprobate Grounds.

3 The differencing the Children of God, and the Children of the Devill, by ſpeciall markes and notes, *Math.* 5. *Pſal.* 15. *&c.*

4 Preſſing the Doctrine of Chriſt, *of preſſing in at the ſtrait Gate, Luke* 13. 24. *&* 4. 28. And

gathering from Scripture thoſe which ſhall be ſaved, into a ſhort ſumme.

5 And by making him make GOD all of Mercie.

And mending in his Converſation, by motives unto preſumption.

If this will not prevaile, but that a man endeavours to draw his knowledge into practiſe, and ſettles himſelfe with care and conſcience to reforme his former wayes and courſes of iniquitie: why then Sathan plots and practiſeth, with all the cunning and policie he hath, to make him reſt in a ſlight, ſuperficiall, and partiall reformation; to content himſelfe with an unſound, or unſaving converſion. For, by the way, I muſt tell you, there may be many converſions, changes, and alterations in a man, from worſe to better; and yet he not truly ſanctified, not become a new creature, nor poſſeſſed of the ſtate of grace, and glorious comforts of true Chriſtians.

1 He may be changed, from a notorious ſinner, to a civill honeſt man: whereas he hath beene before furious, and deſperate in lewd courſes, hee may grow more ſober and moderate in his carriage: And yet, for all this, continue in his ignorance, and a meere ſtranger to the wayes of godlineſſe.

2 From civill honeſtie, he may paſſe on to a formall Chriſtianitie, and become an outward Profeſſor; and outwardly doe, and performe religious ſervices: and yet lye in his ſinnes, and want the power of inward ſanctification.

3 Yet

See *Yates, pag.* 173. & 229.

2 *Bread, pag.* 100.

3 He would have them reſt in a partiall reformation, and ſuperficiall converſion.

Severall unſound changes.

In theſe caſes, Truth is the trueſt Touch-ſtone, to difference a true convert from all ſtates of unregeneration. See *Gouge, p.* 130.

3 Yet further, by a generall power of the Word, and inferior working of the Spirit, he may in ſome ſort be outwardly reformed, and in ſome meaſure inwardly enlightened; hee may have underſtanding and joy by the Miniſterie of the Word, and may doe many things after it, and forſake many ſinnes. *Herod* is ſaid, *Mark. 6.* to have reverenced *Iohn*, to have heard him gladly, and to have done many things: And yet for all this, hee may come ſhort of a ſound converſion; if hee ſuffer ſome maine corruption, ſome one ſweet ſinne, or other, to reigne in him, which hee ſtill feedes upon with delight, and ſenſuall ſweetneſſe; if hee doe not wholly and entirely reſigne and give up himſelfe, his ſpirit, ſoule and body to the Lords ſervice, and to pleaſe him in all things; and with repentance, and reſolution, forſake all his knowne ſinnes. For this is a certaine Rule and Principle with * Divines; *That true turning unto God, and the adviſed and willing remaining in the practice of any one evill, which is diſcovered to a mans Conſcience, by the Light of Gods Word, to be a ſinne, cannot ſtand together.*

Mark.6.20.

* See *Hieron. p.158. Marbury* in his Sermon at P. C. *Dod* upon the Cõmandements, *p.10. Dike, p.195. True Watch, p.61.*

Theſe changes a man may have, and thus many paſſages, from worſe to better; and yet the great and glorious worke of regeneration not wrought upon him. For where there is a ſound converſion, and through-reformation, there a man is wholly ſanctified, and ſet apart unto God, from the ſinfull corruption of his naturall birth, and the evill fruits thereof, to ſerve God in his whole man, both body, ſoule, and ſpirit. He ſhakes hands with all ſinnes; he ſells all for the precious Iewell of the Goſpel; he

Fruits of a true converſion.

he regards not ſinne in his heart, but hath a regard to all Gods Commandements.

Now ſith Sathan, that old Serpent, knowes full well, that it will never ſerve the turne for a man to part but with part of his ſinnes; that his caſe is fearefull enough, whatſoever good, or good deeds ſeeme to be in him, if he yeeld not to the worke of the Holy-Ghoſt, for the leaving but of any one knowne ſinne, which fighteth againſt the peace of his Conſcience; he knowes, that he hath haunt and hold enough in a mans Conſcience, and affections; that hee hath ſufficient intereſt and claime to his damnation, if he can but keepe his ſweet ſinne in heart, and alive in him. And therefore, when any by the Miniſterie of the Word is moved to ſettle and addreſſe himſelfe to a reformation of his wayes, and to redreſſe his former wicked life; he puts in, might and maine, to preſerve in his vigour, and ſoveraigntie, one ſecret delightfull ſinne, or other, at leaſt, in the heart and affection of him, that goes about to reforme himſelfe: He ſingles out one corruption, or other, to which hee findes a man moſt addicted; and this he conceales, and fenceth with all the policie that he hath, that if by any meanes it may eſcape unrepented of, unmortified, and unmedled with.

Mark.6.17. Thus he dealt with *Herod: Herod*, by the preaching of *Iohn*, reformed himſelfe in many things; but Sathan made ſure to keepe him his owne, by that one ſinne of Inceſt. *Naaman* the Syrian, no doubt, beleeved, and followed the Prophet in many things; but he deſired onely, *that the Lord would*

2 King. 5.18.

be

be mercifull unto him, when he went into the houſe of Rimmon. The young man in the Goſpel, in his outward carriage was unreprovable; but that one ſecret ſinne of worldlineſſe, baniſhed him out of the preſence and Kingdome of Chriſt. In this point, Sathan labours to perſwade men to deale with God in the forſaking of their ſinnes, as *Ananias* dealt with the Apoſtle, in parting with his Money. It was a cuſtome, you know, in the Primitive Church, becauſe of the neceſſitie of the Times; that many, out of a zealous and extraordinarie love unto the Goſpel, ſold their Lands, and brought the price, and laid it downe at the Apoſtles feet. *Ananias* amongſt the reſt, would needes ſeeme as forward & zealous in this glorious worke of Charitie, as any other: He ſold his Lands indeed, and brought in the Money, and tender'd it at the Apoſtles feet; but yet ſecretly, ſuſpecting Gods providence, and doubting leſt himſelfe, perhaps, at length ſhould be brought into want, hee kept backe one part of the price of his Poſſeſſion; making ſhew notwithſtanding, to have brought in all. So it is in many, by the malice of Sathan, and bewitching enticements of naturall corruption, in the forſaking of their ſinnes. In a true Converſion indeed, when a man is about to buy the Pearle of great price & unvaluable worth in the Goſpel, the Doctrine of Salvation, the Way to Life, and Graces of Gods Spirit; he makes an univerſall ſale of all his ſinnes; *he ſelleth* (as the Text ſaith) *all that he hath:* not ſome piece of his ſinfull Poſſeſſion, but even the very whole Lordſhip, the entire Inheritance.

Mat.19.22.

Act. 5.

Mat.13.44.

Inheritance. But it is otherwiſe with thoſe whom Sathan inveagleth, and enſnareth in this point. Hee is well enough pleaſed, that they ſhall ſeeme to be as forward in the reformation and amendment of their lives, as any other; and indeed, that they ſhall be reformed in good part, and carry ſome love and affection toward the Word, and Miniſters; ſo that he may keepe hold and poſſeſſion but in one corner of the heart: For he knowes, that that is enough to keepe the whole man, body and ſoule, his owne. If he can ſtay but one ſinne unſold, he knowes the man continues ſtill, by the courſe of divine Law, a bondſlave of Hell. By one little hole a ſhip will ſinke into the bottome of the Sea. The ſtab of a Pen-knife to the heart, will as well ſpeed a man, as all the Daggers that killed *Cæſar* in the Senat-houſe. The ſoule will be ſtrangled with one Cord of vanitie, as well as with all the Cart-ropes of iniquitie: only, the more ſins, the more plagues, and fiercer flame in Hell: but he that lives and dies impenitent in one, it will be his deſtruction. One dramme of poyſon will diſpatch a man; and one reigning ſinne will bring him to endleſſe woe and miſerie. Let us take heed therefore, when we goe about reformation of our ſelves, leſt we be ſurpriſed & overtaken by this malicious craft of Sathan. Let us reſolve upon a through-reformation, which is only and ever undertaken, with a purpoſe not to hold on in the willing practice of any one knowne iniquitie, or ſinfull courſe. Which, when we ſhall carefully & earneſtly go about, Sathan will be ſure to ſet upon us, as *Pharoah* did upon *Moſes* and *Aaron*: When

Simile.

When the Lord had commanded them to goe three dayes journey in the Deſart, to doe ſervice and ſacrifice unto him, that by all meanes hee might hinder them in this holy buſineſſe.

Satan deales with men, as *Pharaoh* did with the Iſraelites.

1. He *would have them to ſtay in the land, and to doe ſacrifice there.* Nay (ſaith *Moſes*) it is not meet to doe ſo; for then wee ſhould offer unto the Lord our God that which is abomination unto the Egyptians. *Exod.8.25.*

2. Sith this would not then ſerve, but that they would needs out of the Land; *I will let you goe* (ſaith *Pharaoh*) *that you may ſacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderneſſe; but goe not farre away.* But *Moſes* would yet none of this, he would not abate a ſoot of the journey the Lord had appointed. *Verſ.28.*

3. Why then (ſaith *Pharaoh*) if you will needs goe ſo farre, I am content your men ſhall goe; but, as it is fitteſt, your children ſhall ſtay at home. *Nay* (ſaith *Moſes*) *we will goe with our young and with our old, with our ſonnes and with our daughters, with our Sheepe and with our Cattell will we goe.* *Cap.10.9.*

4. Well (ſaith *Pharaoh*) I will yeeld ſo farre unto you, your children ſhall goe with you to ſerve the Lord, onely your ſheepe and your Cattell ſhall abide at home. *Verſ.24.*

Nay (ſaith *Moſes*) *our Cattell alſo ſhall goe with us. There ſhall not an hoofe be left.*

Now when all this would not doe, when *Moſes* would not accept of any capitulations, conditions, reſtrictions, or limitations in holy buſineſſes, and the ſervice of God, (for he was at a point, reſolute, he would not leave ſo much as an hoofe behinde:)

hinde.) Now, I ſay, when all the enticements and policies of *Pharaoh* would not prevaile to keepe *Moſes* from ſerving and ſacrificing unto God, and that preciſely and ſtrictly, according to his owne appointment and commandement, but that to this end, at length he wrung himſelfe and all the Iſraelites, out of the bloudy teeth of this perſecuting Wolfe; why then *Pharaoh* armes himſelfe with rage and fury, with ſix hundred choſen chariots, and all the chariots of Ægypt, with fifty thouſand horſmen, and two hundred thouſand footmen, as a Iewiſh Hiſtorian writes, purpoſing with bloudy thirſt to devoure at once, and ſwallow up quicke, even all the Iſraell of God: But you know the concluſion was; the Lord of Heaven gave a moſt glorious deliverance to his owne people, wherein his bottomleſſe goodneſſe, and infinite mercy ſhall ſhine cleare and bright for ever, in all generations of the Church upon earth, and through all eternity in Heaven: But upon their enemies he brought ſuch a ſtrange and terrible confuſion in the Red Sea, which may ſtrike aſtoniſhment and trembling into the heart and loynes of all prophane perſecutors of godlineſſe to the worlds end, and amaze the very maliciouſeſt fiend in hell, while that Kingdome of darkneſſe ſtands.

Exod. 14. 7.

Ioſephus.

Even iuſt thus doth Satan deale with all thoſe who deſire to bee conducted by the light of the Word, out of the Ægypt and ſlavery of ignorance, ſinne, prophaneneſſe; and who are reſolved frankly and freely to give themſelves, ſoules and

See Broade pag. 141. &c.

and bodies, to Gods ſervice, and to enter a ſetled courſe of holineſſe and ſanctification; hee uſeth all meanes and policies to keepe and detaine them in his Kingdome of darkneſſe. If he cannot hold them in his chiefe palace and Court as it were, where ſinne eſpecially raignes and revels it, yet he will ſo farre hamper them, that at leaſt they ſtill hover upon the confines and borders of the Regions of death. If they will needs bee medling with reformation of their ſinfull lives, and that he cannot helpe it, but ſomething muſt be done, he is content to yeeld unto them upon ſome termes or conditions, that they caſt him not quite out of their conſciences, but ſuffer him to ſway and raigne in their hearts, by ſome one gainfull or delightfull ſinne or other.

Satan would condition with men in their converſion.

1. If they will needs feare God, he ſtands not much upon it, but that they may doe it outwardly, and in profeſſion, ſo that they will continue in Ægypt, within the Kingdome of darkneſſe, and lie ſtill in their ſinnes, and under the ſhadow of death.

2. If this will not content them, if they will not reſt here, but will needs out of the Kingdome of darkneſſe, and dominion of death, why he is not much againſt it, but that they may goe the halfe way; that is, he will ſuffer them to forgoe and forbeare the outward practice and perpetration of many ſinnes, ſo that inwardly their heart and affections harbour, nouriſh & embrace them ſtill, and feed upon with a ſenſuall and delightfull remembrance, the ſinfull pleaſures of iniquities formerly committed.

If

3. If they deſire and endevour to become new men, both inwardly and outwardly, to be ſanctified in actions and affections, to ſerve God both in ſoule and body, he will yet yeeld ſo farre, that they may be rid of ſome ſinnes both in heart and practice, as perhaps of ſinnes of cuſtome; but then he will be a ſuitor and ſolicitor unto them, to retaine other ſinnes, as perhaps ſinnes of nature. For example: It may be they may both forbeare the outward practice, and alſo inwardly loath ſwearing, drunkenneſſe, and other ſuch like ſinnes of cuſtome; but they will nuzzle in the boſome of their affections, pride, luſt, anger, and ſuch other ſinnes, the naturall birth as it were of originall corruption.

4. But if they alſo conquer theſe, why then he rempts them mainly to continue at the leaſt in worldlineſſe. * For this in many mens hearts hath greater power, and beares more ſway than nature, or naturall affection. He will ſecretly ſuggeſt unto them, that upon an eager and exceſſive purſuit of gaine and riches, depends their life and livelyhood, their credit and reputation, their contentment and happineſſe in the world; ſo that perhaps at laſt of all, after all this, they reſt and ſettle themſelves upon ſinnes of advantage, as uſury, oppreſſion, unlawfull and exceſſive gaining, earthly-mindedneſſe, ſerving the Times, and ſuch like.

5. But if by the grace of God any be ſo bleſſed from God above, as reſolutely to paſſe thorow all theſe traines and temptations, and like ſtrong

* Foure infallible marks of covetouſneſſe: 1 Carking: 2 Straitned bowels to the neceſſities of the Saints, or any truly poore. 3 Too much buſineſſe in the world. 4 Injuſtice, or uſing of injurious or indirect courſes of getting wealth See *more*, pag. 30. *Gard. of Spirit. Flow. 2. part. pag. G 4.*

ſtrong *Samſons*, breake through all theſe Cords and Cart-ropes of iniquitie and vanitie; ſo that they will not yeeld an ynch to that cruell *Pharaoh* of Hell, nor leave ſo much as an Hoofe behinde them, in his Kingdome of Darkneſſe: why then, this ſpirituall *Pharaoh* preſently armes himſelfe with all the crafts and policies of Hell, with Legions of Fiends, and Princes of the Darkeneſſe of this World; with all his malice, againſt the ſalvation of the ſoules of men; with the fire and furious rage of prophane wretches; with the ſharpe ſwords and impoyſoned arrowes of lying and ſlanderous tongues; and with all other advantages, which either the loweſt Hell, or the wide wicked World can afford. And thus appointed, hee purſues and perſecutes, with bloodie and implacable furie, all thoſe who have eſcaped out of this captivitie, farre more eagerly and enviouſly than ever *Pharaoh* did the Iſraelites: That either hee may bring them backe againe into his bondage, or elſe take them quite away, and deſtroy them; that they may not attaine the full Light of the Saints, nor doe long ſervice unto the Lord. And certainely, if all the power of Hell, the ſtrongeſt temptations, the ſcourge of tongues, the Worlds malice, the ſpightfull ſpirit of prophaneneſſe, the frownings of friends, the ſcornefull inſolencies of enemies, the curſed and enticing cryes of our old companions; if wicked men or damned Devils be able to prevaile, he will be ſure to ſtay them, before they enter into the ſtate of grace, and true bleſſedneſſe. But yet, if a man put on

Pauls armour, in *Eph. 6. Davids* royall courage, *Pſal. 3. 6. Moſes* princely zeale, and truly Chriſtian valour, that *he will not leave a hoofe behinde*; that is, that he will not leave one corruption unmortified, one affection unſanctified, one rebellious action unreformed, one knowne ſinne unrepented of, and unforſaken; one holy dutie unperformed, one Commandement unobeyed: Why then, hee may looke for a more glorious ſpirituall deliverance, than *Moſes* had a temporall: Hell, and confuſion, ſhall ſwallow up all his * enemies; but into his heart, in the meane time, ſhall be ſhed and plentifully powred comfort, joy, and peace; and upon his head ſhall a Crowne of immortalitie flouriſh for ever hereafter.

*See Iſa. 25. 10.

I have ſtayed very long upon the fifth plot and practice of Sathan, whereby he labours to make the Word heard, unpowerfull and uneffectuall for the ſalvation of our ſoules: For, I know, it is much and often exerciſed, and with great ſucceſſe; and by it, he prevailes with very many. When by diligent hearing of Gods Word, faithfully urged upon them, they are driven, and doe addreſſe themſelves to a reformation and amendment of their ſinfull lives; he mightily endeavours to hinder, diſquiet, and interrupt them in it; to make it a reformation unto them but in part, and by halfes; unſound, and unſaving: So that, it may be, they may forſake ſinnes of Cuſtome, as Lying, Swearing, Drunkenneſſe, and ſuch like; but keepe ſinnes of

of Nature, as Pride, Luſt, Anger, and the like: Or, it may be, they may forſake both theſe two kindes of ſinnes, and yet keepe ſinnes of Advantage; as Oppreſſion, unlawfull Gaining, grinding the faces of the Poore, ſerving the Time, and ſuch like: Or, they may leave all theſe, and yet keepe ſinnes of Companie; as, idle and vaine Talking, filthie Ieaſting, rayling againſt and ſlandering their Neighbours, uncharitable judging and cenſuring their Brethren, and the like. It may be, they may be carefull in their generall calling of Chriſtianitie; but careleſſe and unfaithfull in thoſe particular places and callings, wherein God in his providence hath ſet them: Or contrarily; they may be of Chriſtian behaviour abroad, and in publike; as at Sermons, and in the Church: but unconſcionable at home, and in their private families; never teaching, or praying with them: They may ſeeme zealous in the Commandements of the firſt Table, and about the ſervice of God; but in the ſecond, and towards their Neighbour, unmercifull, unconſcionable, and uncharitable: Or, they may deale juſtly and honeſtly with others, but be utterly voide and deſtitute of the knowledge and feare of God: They may bee outwardly reformed, but inwardly full of hollow-heartedneſſe, and hypocriſie: They may leave all other ſinnes, onely keepe one behinde; which is called a mans ſweet, delightfull, and boſome-ſinne.

If Sathan can prevaile with a man any of theſe

wayes, hee keepes him his owne: for hee that is ſoundly converted, juſtified, and ſanctified indeed, muſt needs be out of love with every ſinne, with the whole courſe of iniquitie; and with ſincerity and chearefulneſſe embrace the entire body of Chriſtianitie, and have a regard to all Gods Commandements.

Sathan would hinder perſeverance.

6 Now I come to a ſixt ſleight and deviſe of Sathan, whereby hee labours to make the Word fruitleſſe and unprofitable unto us. If he cannot ſtay us in our reformation, but that we will needs through, and caſt away all ſinnes; why then, hee ſeekes by all meanes to hinder our continuance, and conſtancie. If the Seed of the Word be received with joy, and ſpring up for a time; that is, be practiſed for a while; he rayſeth up ſome perſecution, tribulation, or croſſes, whereby it is preſently blaſted, withers, and comes to nothing. The uncleane ſpirit may for a time goe out of a man, and walke throughout drie places; but if it be poſſible, he will returne with ſeven other ſpirits worſe than himſelfe: and the end of that man, is worſe than the beginning. A man may flye from the pollution and filthineſſe of the World, as it is, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. but by the policie of Sathan, hee may be tangled againe therein: He may be waſhed (as it is in the ſame place) for a while, and yet after wallow againe in the myre of ſinne: He may be endued with an inferior ſanctification of the Spirit, *Heb.* 10. 29. and yet after, by the malice of Sathan, *tread under foot the Sonne of God:* Hee may have a generall participation of the Holy-Ghoſt,

Matth. 13.

Matth. 12. 43.

2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

Heb. 10. 29.

Ghoſt, *Heb. 6. 4.* and yet after a time fall away, to the *very deſpiting of the Spirit of Grace.* I ſpeake not this, as though that any once effectually called, truly ſanctified, poſſeſſed of the ſtate of grace, and enrolled among the Saints, can poſſibly become a caſt-away; it cannot bee: for if once by the power of ſpeciall grace, a man be built upon the Rocke; not the Gates of Hell, not all the powers of Darkeneſſe, nor ſtrongeſt aſſaults of Satan, ſhall ever prevaile againſt him. Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner be removed, than any of Gods ſervants. For if Gods eternall Decree of Election be unchangeable; if his Covenant be everlaſting, and inviolable; if his Truth cannot change, nor his Mercie faile, nor his Power be weakened; if the ſacred Seale of the bleſſed Spirit ſhall ſtand; if the precious blood and fervent prayers of *Chriſt Ieſus* can prevaile; if his Scriptures doe not lye, and deceive; if his ſanctifying Grace cannot die, and periſh; if Himſelfe cannot ceaſe to be: then undoubtedly, if a man be once his, he is his for ever; if he be once truely his ſervant upon Earth, he ſhall for ever hereafter be a glorious Saint in Heaven. My meaning therefore in this point, is onely this: There is a glimmering Light of the Spirit, ſome manner of taſte of the ſweetneſſe of Chriſt, a kind of change, which may be wrought in a man by the preaching of the Word, and yet he not truely and conſtantly converted, but may by the malice and policie of Satan be repoſſeſſed by uncleane ſpirits, and repolluted with the filthineſſe of the World.

Heb. 6. 4.

Math. 16. 18.

Difference betweene a falſe and ſaving change.

Thus we may diſcerne this changeable change (that I may ſo ſpeake) and the ſaving change of Gods ſervants: If, after we have given our Names to Chriſt, and begun to profeſſe and practiſe ſinceritie, we paſſe on, and continually grow in grace, and ſtand for Gods honour and ſervice, againſt all commers; friends or foes, loſſe or diſgrace, oppreſſion or ſlanders, men or devils; why then, undoubtedly, we have the ſanctifying Spirit of God, and ſaving grace; which makes his Children like Trees betwixt the Rivers of Waters, fruitfull in goodneſſe, and as bold as Lyons, in good cauſes. But, if after wee have begun well, wee looke backe with *Lots* Wife; if wee fall in love againe with thoſe ſinnes which wee have forſaken; if Rubbes and Croſſes in the World, will turne us out of the way to Heaven; and our righteouſneſſe be but as the Morning Deaw, which a little heat of Perſecution will drie up: why then, our change was changeable, and not that of Gods children. The Seed of the Word, which wee received with joy, was never deepely rooted in good and honeſt hearts; wee were onely temporarie Converts, not new creatures; temporizing Profeſſors, not true Chriſtians; and our End is like to be worſe than our Beginning; and our Plagues more, than if we had never begun.

Gen.19.26.

Let every man take heed then, in the Name of God, leſt by the traines and temptations of Sathan he be turn'd backe againe from any good courſe; leſt after he be waſhed, he wallow againe in the myre of worldlineſſe, and worldly vanities; and

and after hee hath eſcaped the filthineſſe of the World, leſt he be againe entangled therein. Let us beware of longing after thoſe ſinnes, which we begun in ſome meaſure to reforme; let us not luſt againe after the fleſh-pots of Ægypt, like the Iſraelites, after we be in ſome good ſort enlarged from the bondage of ſinne, and tyrannie of the helliſh *Pharoah*. *Lots* Wife being delivered out of Sodome, was ſurpriſed with a ſenſuall remembrance of the pleaſures and vanities of the place which ſhee had left, of the eaſe and proſperitie which ſhee there enjoyed; and ſo look'd backe upon it: But ſhee was therefore preſently turned into a Pillar of Salt, *Gen.* 19.26. there for ever to be a monument and fearefull ſpectacle of Gods terrible judgements againſt all back-ſliders. If the uncleane ſpirit be caſt out of a man by ſome degrees of reformation, and good beginnings of amendment of life, and have after leave and libertie to returne; he brings with him ſeven Devils worſe than himſelfe, and makes a man farre worſe than he was before. Much better were it for any man never to have knowne or ſtept into the way of righteouſneſſe, than afterward to turne from the holy Commandement of God, and out of a courſe of Chriſtianitie. It is a fearefull Curſe, to continue in hardneſſe of heart, prophaneneſſe of life, and ſinfull courſes: But to leave them for a little, and to ſinke backe againe, is to have *Gods Curſe* bitter againſt them, if they repent not, and the fire of Hell made more hot for them. Firſt, ſickneſſes are curable; but relapſes are very dan-

2 Pet. 2. 21.

gerous, if not irrecoverable. *If a man* (as it is *Heb. 6.*) *hath once beene enlightened, and then fall away, it is impoſſible to be renewed by repentance.* I know that place principally to be underſtood of the higheſt degree of Apoſtacie, and falling away; but hee that falls away from any good courſe, and good beginnings, falls towards that irrecoverable fall, and makes himſelfe more uncapable of repentance, than if he never had been enlightened, or ſtept into the way of Truth: And it is juſt with God, to puniſh ſuch with a reprobate ſenſe, and hearts *that cannot repent*.

Heb. 6. 4, 6.

Rom. 2. 5.

It then deepely and neerely concernes us; ~~for~~ once wee have felt the ſweetneſſe of Grace, and *taſted of the Powers of the World to come*; to drinke deeper of the Waters of Life, and to *follow hard towards the marke, for the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Ieſus*. When wee feele any good motions and purpoſes ariſe in our hearts, let us labour to follow them, to nouriſh them, to blow them up, to make a fire of them; leſt they onely but make a flaſh, and paſſe away as the Lightning. Let us put them in practiſe with zeale, and conſtancie, that we be not as the unfaithfull Waters, which in the Summer are dryed up; or as the dead Trees, which periſh in Winter: but that we remaine whole and ſound, pure and perfect, as the living Waters and Olives of the Lord, that ever ſhed forth their ſweetneſſe and fatneſſe. Let us make a Covenant, even *a Covenant* (as the Scripture ſpeaketh) *of Salt*, durable, and perpetuall, with the Lord, to live before him in holineſſe

2 Chr. 13. 5.

holineſſe and righteouſneſſe all the dayes of our life: For to him that goes through with his holy buſineſſe, that *fights the good fight of Faith, finiſheth his courſe*, and *overcomes*; to him, and to him alone, ſhall all thoſe glorious Bleſſings be performed, which are promiſed in the firſt Chapter of the *Revelation*: *To eate of the Tree of Life, which is in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God*; *Not to be hurt of the ſecond Death*; *To eate of the Manna which is hid*, and *to have the white Stone of Victorie given him*; *To have power given him to rule over Nations, and to be lightened with heavenly brightneſſe, like the Morning Starre*; *To be clothed with white array*, (that is, with heavenly Glory) *and to have his Name continued in the Booke of Life*; *To have a Pillar made in the Temple of God*, (that is, a firme and unmoveable place of eternall Glory;) *To ſup with Chriſt, and to ſit with him upon his Throne for evermore.* Thus ſhall hee bee honoured and crowned with the excellencie, fulneſſe, and varietie of all glory, joy, and happineſſe, who enters with ſinceritie, and couragiouſly ends his Race of Holineſſe, and conquers in his ſpirituall Fight. But *all fearefull men*, (as it is, *Rev.* 21. 8.) who ſlinke backe for feare of Men, or love of the World, or to ſerve the Times; all faint-hearted men in the Lords Battailes, and that fall away from good beginnings; they ſhall be puniſhed *with unbeleevers, with the abominable, with Murtherers and Whore-mongers, with Idolaters and Lyars, in the Lake which burnes with fire and Brimſtone; which is the ſecond Death.*

2 Tim. 4. 7.

Rev. 2.

Rev. 21. 8.

7 But,

7 But, if by the grace and mercie of God, we *quit our ſelves like men*, and hold on comfortably and conſtantly in a ſetled courſe of godlineſſe; yet, for all this, Sathan hath not done: though he can doe us no deadly hurt, yet he will ſtill doe his worſt; for his craft and ſpight is endleſſe. If he ſee there is no hope of bringing us backe againe into his bondage, or making us any more vaſſals and ſlaves to ſinne; yet he will labour to lay ſtumbling-blockes in our way, to bring us upon our knees: now and then, to turne us out of the right path; ſometimes, even to over-turne us with ſome greater and more dangerous fall; hee will lay his traines to intrap and intangle us, if it be poſſible, in ſome old ſweet ſinne: Which, that hee may bring about, hee will uſe the benefit and advantage of cuſtome, becauſe before our calling, wee have much practiſed it; of the frailtie of our owne corruptions, becauſe they have moſt delighted in it; of our old companie, becauſe wee have formerly oftenеſt committed it with them. He will leave no opportunitie, advantage, or circumſtance omitted, and unaſſayed, to hale us back into one or other ſpeciall ſinne, of our unregeneration. If this will not ſtop, hee will follow all occaſions, enticements, and temptations, the tide of our owne affections, the ſtreame of the times, if by any meanes hee can caſt us into ſome groſſe and ſcandalous ſinne. Theſe are Sathans plots and practiſes againſt thoſe, who hold on in a conſtant courſe of holineſſe: if they will not bee brought to tumble themſelves againe in the myre of

Hee ſtrives, if hee cannot make them to fall totally and finally, that they may fall partially, and as frequently as he can.

Sathans policie.

of ſinne, and ſinfull pleaſures, yet he will doe what hee can, now and then, to ſpot and ſtaine their Chriſtian lives with ſome grieuous fall, or other; that ſo, to his utmoſt, hee may bring upon them Gods diſfavour, and angry countenance, diſgrace and diſconceit amongſt their brethren, diſcomforts and feares of heart within themſelves. But if a man, firſt, by keeping freſh in his minde the uncertainties and vanities of this vaine World: ſecondly, by carefull and continuall watching over his deceitfull heart: thirdly, by exerciſing and practiſing with diligence and delight, all holy meanes of preſerving grace, and ſtarving ſinne; as reading, hearing, conference, meditation of the Word of God; Prayer, publike and private; with himſelfe, and with his family: fourthly, by declining prophane, unprofitable, and unchriſtian companie, and acquaintance; and frequenting, with joy and fruit, the fellowſhip of the Saints: fifthly, by an humble entertainment, nouriſhment, and practice of the good motions of the Spirit: ſixtly, by a dayly examination of the ſtate of his Conſcience, and reparation of the decayes of Grace: ſeventhly, by his godly jealouſie over little ſinnes, and preſent renewing repentance after every ſlip. I ſay, if by ſuch meanes as theſe (which are notable preſervatives againſt the poyſon of ſinne) a man fence himſelfe from groſſe and ſcandalous falls; or elſe, if by the politike malice of Sathan, and weakeneſſe of his owne fleſh, he be overtaken with ſome fouler ſinne; and yet notwithſtanding, beſides pangs of griefe, and anguiſh

Preſervatives againſt ſinne, whereby Gods children keepe themſelves from groſſe falls.

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anguiſh of ſpirit, for grieving his gracious God, hee looke better to his feet, and run faſter in the Race of ſanctification after his fall; if his falling into ſinne teach him theſe good leſſons, which in ſuch caſes are ordinarily learned of all true Chriſtians; for all things, even * ſinne it ſelfe, makes to the beſt in Gods Children.

* See *Gouge*, p. 171, 172.

The good that they get by their falls.

1 Hee learnes by his fall, to diſtaſte his pride, and ſelfe-conceit, to let fall his Peacockes traine, and deſpaire of his owne ſtrength.

2 To depend only upon God, the Word of his Grace, and the power and perpetuall influence of his Spirit, for his ſtanding upright in the wayes of Righteouſneſſe, and preſervation from moſt fearefull and dangerous downe-falls.

3 To cling cloſer about him; to claſpe faſter hold with the hand of faith upon the glorious Paſſion and meritorious juſtice of Chriſt; with much heartineſſe and zeale to ſeeke and ſue unto him for his ſpeciall aide and aſſiſtance againſt Satans temptations, his owne corruptions, and outward occaſions of ſinne.

4 To bluſh and be aſhamed of himſelfe; for that he having had his ſoule waſhed with the precious blood of Chriſt, and having received ſo great favour, mercy, and pardon at the hands of God, yet hath wretchedly and unthankfully defiled it againe; and ſo wofully and wickedly abuſed his extraordinary love and kindneſſe.

5 With more reſolute vow, proteſtation, and practice, to renounce and abandon Satan; with more perfect hatred, and deteſtation, to loath and abhorre

abhorre all manner of ſinne; *the Garment ſpotted of the fleſh, and all appearance of evill.*

Jude 23. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 22.

6 To become watchfull, and wiſe; by taking ſpeciall notice of all the motives, temptations, meanes, occaſions, baites, allurements to that ſinne, into which hee fell; for the avoiding and declining of it afterwards.

7 To thinke charitably of other men, that fall, and are ſuddenly overtaken in any offence; not to be too eager, hot, and cenſorious againſt them; but out of his owne experience, to give them comfort, inſtructions, and directions, and to labour to reſtore them with the ſpirit of meekeneſſe. Now, I ſay, if a man be either fore-armed and fenced (as I ſaid) from falls; or elſe, after his fall, weepe bitterly, repent ſincerely, watch afterward more carefully, walke more zealouſly; and out of his ſpirituall wiſedome, make that uſe and benefit of his fall, as I have told you: then hee may have comfort, that Sathan gets no great advantage this way.

8 Like a fierce cruell Dragon, ſith he cannot devoure the Womans Child ſo ſoone as ever it is brought forth; that is, he cannot repoſſeſſe and reigne againe in a true Chriſtian and regenerate man, brought forth by the power of the Word, in the Wombe of the Church; he therefore caſteth out of his mouth, after him, flouds of outward croſſes and vexations. If he cannot wound him in his ſoule, yet he will vexe him in his body, goods, and good name: if he cannot hinder him of Heaven, he will give him little reſt or quiet upon

He ſends forth flouds of perſecution and affliction after them.

Rev. 12. 4, 15.

upon Earth: if hee cannot bring him into diſgrace and diſfavour with God, he will be ſure to rayſe him hatred enough, malice, and diſcountenance amongſt men: He will doe his worſt, to fill and loade him with all outward diſcomforts and diſcouragements; as povertie, ſickneſſe, ſlanders, ſcoffings, raylings, reproaches, contempts, and a thouſand other perſecutions.

Comfortable conſiderations againſt afflictions.

But in ſuch caſes as theſe, let every child of God comfort, refreſh, and hold himſelfe in heart, cheare, and courage, by ſuch conſiderations as theſe.

1 From Gods Decree, the example of the Saints, and the Sonne of God himſelfe. *Act.* 14. 22.

Firſt, it is a Decree of Heaven, reſolved upon and ratified by the Lord our God, confirmed by the experience of all the Patriarkes and Prophets, of the Apoſtles and profeſſors of Chriſt, of all the Saints and ſervants, nay, and of the Sonne of God himſelfe; that, *through many tribulations wee muſt enter into the Kingdome of Heaven.* So often therefore as wee ſhall ſee any miſeries or afflictions comming towards us, for our profeſſion of ſinceritie, and righteouſneſſe ſake; let us acknowledge them to be as ſo many moſt certaine and infallible markes, that we are in the right way to Heaven: through which, if we but walke a little further with patience, we ſhall deſcry a Crowne of Glory, which is our owne for ever; of which, all the afflictions and preſſures of a thouſand Worlds are not neere worthy.

Rom. 8. 18.

2 From the gracious effects of afflictions, for our good.

Secondly, though by this meanes, by theſe outward croſſes and afflictions, Sathan diſchargeth upon us the very gall of his bitterneſſe, the poyſon of his malice, and arrowes of his ſpight; yet, by the

the mercifull and medicinall hand of God, they are returned upon his owne head, they ſtrike through the heart of ſinne, and become as precious reſtoratives, to repaire in us the decayes of ſpirituall life: for in Gods children, croſſes and afflictions have theſe worthy effects and workings.

1 They ſtart us out of our ſecuritie, careleſneſſe, and coldneſſe, which by little and little may grow upon the beſt: They breed in us a conceit and ſenſe of our owne wants, and the neceſſitie of Gods providence and protection: They adde Oyle unto the flame of our firſt love, put life into our religious exerciſes, and power and ſpirit into our prayers. They make us watchfull, &c.

2 They curbe and controule the pride, inſolencie, and impatiencie of our nature: They coole and kill the heat, headlongneſſe, and intemperancie of our affections: They weaken indeed the whole old *Adam* in us, with all his luſts, concupiſcence, and venome; but give ſtrength to the new man, with all his godly and gracious motions, holy and heavenly actions. Humble, &c.

3 They make us with indignation to ſpit in the very face of this vaine, deceitfull, and flattering World; the temporall love of which, is the eternall loſſe both of bodies & ſoules in the other World: They happily weane us from the love of it, and make us willing to part with her paps; to bid all her enticements adiew, and to trample under feet the fading pleaſures & vanities thereof: they make us to teare our groveling hearts, and rent our dull affections from the Earth, to which they cleave, and To contemne the World.

and are glued ſo faſt, and to lift up both our heads and hearts to Heaven, and to the glory which is to be revealed, longingly to deſire the comming of Chriſt, the Life that laſteth, and to be clothed with our Houſe, which is from above.

To ſee further into the myſterie of godlineſſe.

4 Laſtly, they are as ſharpe and precious eye-ſalves, to cleare and enlarge the ſpirituall ſight of our ſoules, too much dimmed and darkened with earthly duſt, and with gazing too long on the painted glory of the World; that ſo wee may ſee further into the great myſterie of godlineſſe, deeper into the maſſe and dung-hill of our owne corruptions and frailties, wider upon the vanities of the World, and higher into the happineſſe of Heaven, and that great Beautie, Glory, and Majeſtie above: They ſerve unto us as ſowre Sawces, and bitter Wormewood, to bring us out of love with our ſweet ſinnes, and to breed a diſtaſte in our mouth againſt tranſitorie delights: They are as ſharpe pruning-knives, to lop and cut away the exceſſes, vanities, and unneceſſarie cares that grow upon us; and ſo to trimme us, that wee may bring forth more profitable, plentifull, and fairer fruits in godlineſſe and Chriſtianitie.

Thus Sathan is diſappointed in his plots, and policie; his malice makes a medicine for our ſoules: hee purpoſeth and hopes, by croſſes and afflictions to turne us backe, or make us wearie in our courſe of holineſſe; but by the mercy of God, they become as ſpurres, to pricke us forward in our Chriſtian Race; and as hedges to keepe us in, from wandering out of the way.

Now,

Now, in a third place; That Gods child may not too much be caſt downe, or put out of heart, for croſſes and perſecutions rayſed againſt him for a profeſſion, and the practice of ſinceritie; let him conſider, that howſoever Sathan and wicked men be the inſtruments, and executioners, which maliciouſly procure, and immediately inflict miſeries and vexations upon the children of God; though they be the meanes to lay tortures and torments upon their bodies, croſſes and loſſes upon their goods and outward eſtates, ſpots and impreſſion and crueltie upon the face of their harmeleſſe innocencie, ſlanders and diſgraces, imputations and ſtaining aſperſions upon their reputations and good names; ſometimes terrors, temptations, and amazements upon their minds: Yet in all theſe, our gracious God hath the chiefeſt ſtroke, a principall hand, and the greateſt ſway; he directs, limits, and moderates the rage and furie of all our enemies, whether they be Devils or men, as it pleaſeth him; and ever certainely to the ſingular good of his children, if they be patient and faithfull. *Miſerie* (ſaith *Iob, chap. 5. 6.*) *commeth not forth of the Duſt, neither doth afflictions ſpring out of the Earth.* Neither indeed, principally and originally from Man, the Lord of the Earth; nor from the Prince that rules in the Aire; nor from the Hoſt of Heaven: God himſelfe is the chiefe commander, guider, and directer of all vexations, and ill of puniſhment that befalls any man; and inflicts it, for our ſinnes and corruptions, upon the reprobates, as

3 Though Satan and his inſtruments be the inſtrument to afflict, yet God is the principall Agent, who will order all for their good.

Iob 5. 6.

appeares in *Pharoah*, for their further hardening and confuſion; upon his elect, for their converſion and correction.

Let us then, in all our ſufferings and afflictions, ſtirred up againſt us for ſticking to ſinceritie, and keeping a good Conſcience; lift up our eyes to the mightie Lord of Heaven and Earth: who, by the ſtrong Arme of his Omnipotencie, holds faſt in a Chaine, Sathan, that raging Lion, and great *Goliah*, that hee cannot ſtirre one Linke further than hee will give him leave; hee cannot goe a haires breadth beyond his Commiſſion: Nay, and that which hee is ſuffered to doe, makes one way or other for our farre greater good. Let us conſider, what a loving and tender-hearted Father hath us under his correction; and holds in his hand the furie of Sathan, the malice of men, the power and particular ſtings of all creatures, as Rods and Scourges, to reforme and amend us; to keepe us in a courſe of holineſſe, and in the right way to Heaven. His fatherly love and tender-heartedneſſe unto his, and ſuch as feare him, doth indeareneſſe and unchangeableneſſe as farre ſurpaſſe the moſt compaſſionate bowels of any earthly father, as God ſurpaſſeth man; and, an infinite nature, a finite creature. The kindneſſe of a mother to her child, is nothing to that love which God beareth to a true Chriſtian. *A mother may forget her child, and not have compaſſion upon the ſonne of her wombe.* But God neither can, nor will forget him. The ſtonie Rockes and Mountaines ſticke faſt and ſure unto their foundations; but

Iſa. 49. 15.

Gods

Gods love to his child, is farre ſurer and ſounder. *The Mountaines ſhall remove, and the Hills ſhall fall downe* (ſaith God by *Iſaiah*) *but my Mercie ſhall not depart from thee; neither ſhall the Covenant of my Peace fall away, ſaith the Lord, that hath compaſſion on thee.* Can any man ſtoppe the courſe of the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres? Can hee change the Seaſons of the Day and the Night? No more can any creature, or a world of creatures, ſtoppe and turne aſide the ſtreames of Gods endleſſe mercies and favours to his faithfull ſervants. *If you can change* (ſaith God by *Ieremie*) *if you can change the courſes of the Sunne, and of the Moone, and of the Starres; if you can breake my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, that there ſhould not be Day and Night in their ſeaſon; then may my Covenant be broke unto David, my ſervant; then will I caſt off all the Seed of Iſrael: Ier.* 31. 33. You may therefore make ſure of it; every ſanctified and ſincere man is ever in Gods ſight, for his good and preſervation; hee is *graven upon the palme of his hand*, hee is *ſet as a Signet upon his arme, and as a Seale upon his heart.* God is ever farre more ſenſible, tender, and compaſſionate of the ſighes, teares, and miſeries of his children, than any man can be of the pricking of the precious ball and apple of his owne eye. Wee have his Promiſe, ſealed with the precious bloud of his owne Sonne, bound with an Oath; That ſo, *by two immutable things, wherein it is impoſſible that God ſhould lye, wee might have ſtrong conſolation*; That, *hee will never faile and forſake his*; That, *hee will*

Iſa. 54. 10.

Ier. 31. 33.

Iſa. 49. 16. *Cant.* 8. 6.

Zach. 2. 8.

Heb. 6. 18.

Heb. 13. 5.

1 Cor. 10. 13. *will never lay more upon them, than hee will make them able to beare.* Hee gives them comfort in all their afflictions, deliverance from them, and benefit by them. In all troubles, hee most certainely either quite frees them, or graciously preserves them, in them; so farre as is best for his glory, and their good; and usefull for the Church, and his other children.

Let no child of God then be dismayed or discouraged for any crosses, slanders, or persecutions, which befall him for his profession, and practice of holinesse and sinceritie. Though Sathan hath his worke in them, and prophane and wicked men a part; yet our gracious God, so loving and tender-hearted a Father, hath the principall stroake and chiefe finger in them: Sathans worke, and end is, to vexe and discourage.

* Cyprian Epist. ad Antonian. lib. 4. 2. *It is evermore the worke of the Devill,* (saith one of the * ancient Fathers) *that hee may with Lyes teare the servants of God, and by false Opinions spread concerning them, may defame their glorious name; that such as are bright in the light of their owne Conscience, may be darkened and disgraced by the reports of others.*

Why the wicked hate and persecute the godly. I

1 Joh. 3. 11. Wicked and prophane men, because they are in Darkenesse, and their workes are evill, they cannot endure the children of Light, and their holinesse of life. For this is the root and fountaine of all their malice and crueltie; as appeares 1 *Ioh.* 3. 12. *Cain slew his brother; and wherefore slew he him? Because his owne workes were evill, and his brothers*

thers good. Hence growes and ſprings all the furie and rage, all the wrongs and ſlanders, which are wont to be layd on true Chriſtians: They are hated even for their very goodneſſe, and becauſe they will not runne with the wicked unto the ſame exceſſe of riot: They are filled with contempt and reproach, with the mockings of the wealthy, and deſpightfulneſſe of the proud, becauſe they will not ſweare, ſwagger, lye, poure in ſtrong drinke, prophane the Sabbaths, follow the faſhions and corruptions of the Times. In a word, becauſe they will not be prophane in this World, and damned in the World to come. And beſides, I know not how, wicked men thinke, that by the commonneſſe of ſinne, their ſinfull courſes become more commendable; and, that the multitude of offendors makes them more excuſable, and their offences pardonable. *It is the comfort* (ſaith an ancient * Father) *of evill men, to carpe at the good; thinking, that by the great number of offendors, the guilt of their faults is diminiſhed and abated.*

1 Pet. 4. 4.

2

* Jerom.

But Gods worke and end, in all falſe reports unjuſtly rayſed againſt his children, and in other croſſes whatſoever; is to ſtirre up and revive in them zeale, devotion, and faithfulneſſe, in praying, prayſing, and ſerving him: to purge out of them the droſſe and relickes of ſome old ſinne; to humble them, and to bring them to a true denying of themſelves; to trie their faith, patience, and conſtancie; or for their greater good, one way or other.

Gods aime in his childrens afflictions.

4 Afflictions are no ſtrange things.

A fourth conſideration, whereby the true Chriſtian may be kept in heart and comfort againſt all croſſes and calumniations which hee ſhall meete with, in his courſe of holineſſe and ſanctification, is this: It is no ſtrange thing that doth befall him, when he is perſecuted for ſinceritie; but the very beaten way to Heaven, trodden by all ſuch feet, as ever walked in faith and obedience. *Abel* begun in this Cup of Perſecution, and vexation, for his ſervice to God, to all thoſe who would give their Names to Chriſt, or fight under his Banner to the Worlds end. The Patriarkes and Prophets, and holy men of old, followed and pledged him: They were tryed *by mockings and ſcourgings, by bonds and impriſonment; they were ſtoned, they were hewen aſunder, they were tempted, they were ſlaine with the ſword; they wandered up and downe in Sheepes-skins, and Goats-skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented; whom the World was not worthie of; they wandered in Wildernesſes, and Dennes, and Caves of the Earth.* Nay, Chriſt Ieſus himſelfe, the Sonne of God, and our bleſſed Saviour, drunke deepe and large of this Cup; it was the Baptiſme wherewith he was baptized. His Apoſtles and Diſciples followed; they endured all the bloudie and mercileſſe cruelties, which fierce and furious Wolves are wont to inflict upon ſilly and harmeleſſe Sheepe: for they were ſent out into the World, as Sheepe amongſt Wolves. There come after, and drinke of the ſame Cup, millions of bleſſed men and women, under the primitive Perſecutions: Of which, ſome were ſcalded,

The Saints have gone before us.

*Heb.*11 36,37.

Nay, Chriſt himſelfe.

*Math.*20 23.

*Math.*10.16.

ſcalded, ſome burned, ſome broyled, ſome hanged, ſome beheaded, ſome throwne downe from rockes upon ſtakes, ſome ſtabbed in with forkes, ſome racked, and torne in pieces, their tongues cut out, their eyes bored out, their fleſh twitched off with Pinſons, womens breſts ſeared off with hot yrons, pricked under the nayles with Needles, and a thouſand more wayes tormented, with as great varietie and exquiſiteneſſe, as politike malice could deviſe, and prophane crueltie execute. If wee paſſe along from thence, even to theſe Times; yea, and if our eyes were ſo enlightened, that we could looke upon the ſtate of Gods children, and their way to Heaven, even to the Worlds end; we ſhould ever be able to trace them along by the teares of Brine, and bloud, which are powred out and ſpilt for the profeſſion of Gods Truth, and practice of holineſſe. This then is, was, and ever will be, the lot and portion of all thoſe who are fitting and preparing for Heaven. They are ever perſecuted one way, or other. If by reaſon of the milde and peaceable Times, they fight not unto bloud, and paſſe the fierie Triall; yet they ſhall have their troubles, oppreſſions, and diſgraces; at leaſt, they ſhall be ever ſure to be payd home with the ſcourge of tongues: they ſhall be loaden with ſlanders, and falſe reports; they ſhall be made a gazing-ſtocke, a by-word, and Table-talke; a ſcorne, reproach, and deriſion to them that are round about them: as *David* was, *Pſal.* 79. 4. Which being ſo, why ſhould not a common caſe, in the cauſe of God, breed a common *Pſal.* 79. 4.

comfort in true Chriſtians? Why ſhould any of them thinke much to drinke of the ſame Cup, that the deareſt Saints and ſoules, now bleſſed with the Lord, have begun to them in; and of which, all that will be ſaved, even to the laſt day, muſt taſte, and follow? Why ſhould any man, that truly loves God, or lookes for the joyes of the other World, ſeeke or deſire a priviledge above all the children of God, that ever were; and even above the Sonne of God himſelfe, Chriſt Ieſus? Moſt unworthy is hee of the glorious comforts of Grace, of the inward Peace, that paſſeth all underſtanding, and of that Glory which is to be revealed; who, for a ſlanderous tale, a lying tongue, a reproachfull tearme, or the feare and face of any mortall man, ſlinkes back from a bold profeſſion of ſinceritie, and from the true ſervice of the living God.

In ſufferings and afflictions for Gods cauſe, there is not onely matter of patience, but even occaſion of glory. They are like ſtarres in the forehead, honourable maimes, conformities to Ieſus Chriſt, Liveries of a Chriſtian ſouldier.

5 2. Cor. 4. 17. Afflictions are but ſhort, and they worke a weight of glory.

Fifthly, let him conſider, that his momentanie croſſes and afflictions cauſe an exceeding and everlaſting weight of glory. Let his vexation be never ſo grievous, his perſecutors never ſo great, and mightie; neither they, nor that, can laſt long. For the life of man, and all the glory thereof, doth paſſe away like a Ship in the Water, whoſe tract cannot be ſeene againe; like an Arrow through the aire, or a Weavers Shuttle through his worke; like

like a fading Flower, ſuddenly plucked up and withered; like Graſſe, like Smoake, like a Dreame, like a Bubble of the Water. Though a Chriſtian therefore be never ſo deepely plunged into * miſeries, he ſhall abide but a while under the waters of affliction; the day of redemption cannot be farre off. Though he ſhould paſſe through the teeth of wilde Beaſts, upon the ſword of the Tyrant, through the flames of fire; though his braines ſhould be daſht againſt the walls, his limbes lye ſcattered in the ſtreets, and his bloud runne downe every channell: yet ſhall he, ere it be long, glorioufly riſe againe, in deſpight of all the powers of Darkeneſſe, and bloudineſſe of cruell men. Hee ſhall entirely be reſtored, by the mightie and immediate hand of God; hee ſhall be clothed with Light, and immortalitie; his bloud ſhall be revenged, and *all teares wiped from his eyes*; and there ſhall be ſet upon his head a Crowne of everlaſting joy, peace, and happineſſe.

* As many times they are. See *David*, *Pſal.* 69. 1, 2.

Rev. 7. 17.

Sixtly, comfort unſpeakable, and glorious, may ſpring up in the heart of Gods child, amidſt his ſufferings for the cauſe of God, out of a conſideration, That in all afflictions, without exception, Chriſt ſuffereth with him. *Paul* was the mirrour and miracle of all Chriſtians, for the varietie and glorioufneſſe of his ſufferings; you may ſee a ſtrange and unmatchable Catalogue of them, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. *&c.* He was in ſtripes above meaſure, plenteouſly in priſon, in death oft. Of the Iewes, five times received hee fortie ſtripes, ſave one; he was thrice beaten with Rods, he was once

6
Chriſt doth ſuffer and ſympathize with his children in affliction. See *Iſa.* 63. 9.

2 *Cor.* 11. 23, *&c.*

once ſtoned, he ſuffered thrice ſhipwracke; nighe and day was he in the deepe Sea: In journeying, he was often; in perils of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils of his owne Nation, in perils among the Gentiles, in perils in the Citie, in perils in the Wilderneſſe, in perils in the Sea, in perils among falſe Brethren; in wearineſſe, and painefulneſſe; in watching often; in hunger, and thirſt; in faſtings often; in cold, and in nakedneſſe. Yet all theſe, and what other croſſes and afflictions befell him, he calls and accounts them the ſufferings and afflictions of Chriſt. *Now* (ſaith *Paul, Col.* 1. 24.) *now rejoyce I in my ſufferings for you, and fulfill the reſt of the afflictions of Chriſt in my fleſh, for his Bodies ſake, which is the Church.* And *Col.* 1. 24. *2 Cor.* 1. 5. *As the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our conſolation aboundeth through Chriſt.* *Lazarus*, in all his povertie, contempt, ſickneſſe, ſores, or what other miſeries, ſuffered nothing wherein Chriſt was not partaker of his griefe and ſorrow. So ſweet and bleſſed a conſent and ſympathie is there betwixt Chriſt, the Head, and all true Chriſtians, his members; that ſo long as the great myſterie of that myſticall Vnion ſtands true and ſure, (which is for ever) all holy men, and ſervants of God, in all their ſufferings for the Name of Chriſt, profeſſion of his Truth, and practice of ſinceritie, ſhall have Chriſt himſelfe partner and partaker of their miſeries; which is able to refreſh the heavieſt heart, in the greateſt extremities.

I have ſtayed long upon this point; to wit, how Sathan labours might and maine, by croſſes and

and ſlanders, to diſcourage Gods child, and to ſtop his courſe in the wayes of righteouſneſſe; and in laying downe ſome comforts againſt them: becauſe thouſands, at the very firſt entrance, or after ſome ſmall continuance, are wofully turned backe from grace, and ſinceritie, by temptations, reproaches, and troubles rayſed againſt them; by their owne rebellious fleſh, Sathan, and prophane men.

9 Satan hinders the working of the Word, by ſpiritual Pride.

Now, in a ninth place, if all this will doe no good; if the heat of perſecution inflame the zeale of the true Chriſtian; if reproaches and afflictions be ſo farre from daunting and dulling his forwardneſſe, that they ſet an edge upon his affections, and adde ſtrength to his reſolution, in proceeding in the glorious ſtate of Chriſtianitie: Why then, the laſt ſleight and temptation of Sathan, to hinder the ſanctifying power and ſucceſſe of the Word, and to make it fruitleſſe and unprofitable, is ſpirituall Pride; which, by his malicious cunning, and helliſh Alchymie, hee extracts even out of his graces and vertues; out of ſuch ſweet flowers, he rayſes poyſon: and ſith he cannot keepe goodneſſe utterly out of the ſoule, he uſes it ſelfe as an inſtrument, to weaken & wound it ſelfe. For when a man is moſt endued and enriched with extraordinarie gifts, holy graces, and ſpirituall ſtrength; Sathan ſeekes moſt buſily to make him proud of them, and to puffe him up with an over-weening conceit of his owne worth; that ſo himſelfe may loſe the comfort of them, his brethren the fruit of them, and God the glory of

of them. This ſpirituall Pride, is the ſame in our corruptions and ſinfull affections, that the Shirt is in our Clothing; that is to ſay, It ſits the cloſeſt unto us, and is laſt put off: *it is the white Devill* (as a worthy Divine calls it.) That ſinne doth lye, and inſenſibly inſinuate it ſelfe; and lurkes amid our graces, and good actions, as a dead Fly in the Apothecaries Ointment. It is, as it were, Sathans laſt intrenchment, which hee holds the longeſt, and with moſt reſolute and deſperate pertinacie, and is hardlyeſt driven out; much ſpirituall wiſedome, a great meaſure of humilitie, and the whole Armour of God is required to this combate. For he is ſo endleſſe, and exerciſed in the point; that, if we be ſo humble, that he cannot make us proud of any thing elſe, he will labour to make us proud even of our humilitie; and proud, that we are not proud of our gifts.

Spirituall Pride may ariſe in Gods children.

Except a Chriſtian continually and carefully watch over his heart, and guard it with humilitie, and a lowly conceit of himſelfe; this privie Pride may ſteale upon him, before he be aware.

1 From a conſideration of their priviledges.

And firſt, it may ſpring out of a conſideration of the excellencie of his eſtate, and the varietie of his peculiar bleſſings, and ſpeciall priviledges, which the ungodly men neither can, nor doe enjoy. For when he is once tranſlated from Darkneſſe to Light, from prophaneneſſe to ſinceritie, from Nature to Grace; out of the Dominion of Sathan, into the Kingdome of Chriſt, by the great worke of regeneration: hee is preſently *made partaker of the Divine Nature*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. hee

Priviledges of the godly.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

is

is entitled, by the right of the Sonne of God, *to an inheritance immortall, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for him.* 1 Pet. 1. 4.
While hee is thus looking upon himselfe, possessed of this happinesse, and planted in this glorious Paradise; Sathan is secretly blowing the coales of his hidden corruption, to enkindle and rayse there-out an over-weening conceit of his owne worth, and to puffe him up with pride of his owne gifts and graces; whence may ensue two foule and hatefull inconveniences: For so hee may grow by little and little to justifie himselfe too much, whereby Gods glory may be lessened and darkened; and to despise his Brethren, whereby his exercise of charitie may be hindered.

This spirituall Pride may occasionally, and by accident, spring out of a godly and gracious care, to keepe and preserve himselfe unspotted and undefiled in his happy and glorious state of grace, and regeneration. For while he is casting with himselfe, and concluding upon some sound and substantiall course of holinesse and obedience in the wayes of godlinesse; Sathan labours might and maine, to draw him to a singularitie of unwarrantable conceits and opinions; that by a tedious and unnecessarie pursuit and possession thereof, he may keepe him cold and uncomfortable in the practice of the chiefe and most materiall duties of Christianitie; and to make him place the height of Religion, and heat of zeale, in continuall conference and most peremptorie defence

2 From their care, to keepe themselves undefiled.

defence of ſome groundleſſe fancies; from whence Sathan buſily ſtrives to toll him out, to ſeparation. Which courſe of ſeparating from, and condemning our Church, in the judgement of our ſincereſt Divines, is full of pride, contention, and confuſion.

Againſt ſeparation from our Church.

1 For firſt, certaine it is, our Church, in that moſt exquiſite and worthy confeſſion of Faith contained in the Articles of Religion, doth hold and profeſſe all ſubſtantiall points of Divinitie as ſoundly, as any Church in the World, none excepted, neither in this Age, nor in the primitive times of the Church.

2 Secondly, it hath communion with, and teſtimonie of all other true Churches.

3 Thirdly, in it are to be had the meanes of ſalvation, in a powerfull and plentifull manner: and in the bowels thereof, even they that goe out of our Church, if they be truly converted, received that precious and bleſſed vigour, which is able to quicken them to eternall life.

4 Fourthly, a Church may be a true Church, though it ſhould have ſpots, and blemiſhes; though there be ſome Swine and Dogges in it. In S. *Pauls* time, the Corinthians were called the Church of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 1, 2. And yet, at that very time, were ſome in an Hereſie, ſome in Inceſt, ſome that had not repented of their filthineſſe, 2 *Cor.* 12. 20, 21. The like may be ſaid of the Churches of Aſia, *Rev.* 2. 3.

5 Fifthly, though outward proſperitie, worldly honour, and plentie, be rather the lot of falſe, hereticall,

hereticall, and Apoſtaticall Churches, than an individuall and neceſſary mark of the true Church; yet, if unto our unparallel'd Peace, both for duration and entireneſſe, we adde our many and miraculous deliverances, ſtrange defeatments, and preventions of Popiſh Plots; of their Bulls, Conſpiracies, and hoſtile Invaſions; of their Powder, Poyſons, Daggers, Dags, and all manner of execrable attempts, machinations, and underminings, which either Hell could deviſe, or that deſperate and bloudy Faction adventure upon, and manage: I ſay, if all theſe be put together, and well weighed; it is impoſſible, but that wee ſhould therein ſee, acknowledge, and adore the ſpeciall finger of Gods holy providence, upholding his owne Arke amongſt his owne people; and pointing out to all the World, the truth of that Church, upon whoſe ſide, and for whoſe ſafetie and glory hee ſo mightily ſtands. This moſt extraordinarie grace and favour of Divine aſſiſtance, having not in one thing, or two, ſhewed it ſelfe, nor for ſome few dayes or yeeres appeared; but in ſuch ſort, ſo long continued, our manifold ſinnes and tranſgreſſions ſtriving to the contrary: What doth it elſe import, or what can wee leſſe thereupon conclude, than that God would thereby tell and teach the World, That the thing which hee bleſſeth, defendeth, and keepeth ſo ſtrangely, cannot but be of him, and his ſaving and ſacred Truth?

Ill doe they then, who tranſported with a pang of ſpirituall Pride, abandon, forſake, and ſeparate from

from our Church, as though Gods true worſhip and ſalvation were not there to be found. You ſee how Sathan by ſpirituall Pride may carry and caſt a man, from a ſetled and ſound courſe of holineſſe and ſinceritie, upon the dangerous Rockes of ſingularitie and ſeparation. But underſtand me aright, what I meane by ſingularitie. I meane that onely which ariſeth out of privie Pride, is upholden by ſelfe-will, and obſtinateneſſe, and many times ends in ſeparation; and hath neither ground nor defence from ſound judgement, ſpirituall wiſedome, or true tenderneſſe of Conſcience, joyned with humilitie, and willingneſſe to be rightly informed. I meane not ſingularitie, in reſpect of holineſſe and unſpottedneſſe of life, in reſpect of difference and diſtance from the ſinfull faſhions of the times: For in this ſenſe, every man that will ſave his ſoule, muſt be ſingular. Hence it is, that our Saviour asketh his followers, in *Math.* 5. *what ſingular thing they doe*, if they doe but as the Publicans doe? As if hee ſhould have ſaid: You that will be Chriſtians, muſt be of a more heavenly temper, and higher ſtraine, than the moſt men, and the greater part of the World: You muſt be ſingular, and ſhine as Lights amid a naughtie and crooked generation. Hence is it, that Gods children ever were, and ever will be, *Signes* and *Wonders*, *Miracles* and *Monſters*, in the opinion and cenſure of moſt, amongſt whom they live; gazing ſtockes, both by reproaches and afflictions, *Heb.* 10. 33. *Behold* (ſaith *Iſaiah*, *Chap.* 8. 18.) *I and the children whom the Lord hath*

Iſa. 8. 18.

given

given me, are as ſignes and as wonders in Iſrael, by the Lord of Hoſts, which dwelleth in Mount Sion. I am become (ſaith *David*) *as it were a monſter unto many*, (or, to the great men of the World, as ſome render it) *Pſal.* 71. 7. And in another Pſalme, *Pſal.* 79. 4. *Wee are a reproach to our neighbours, even a ſcorne and a deriſion unto them that are round about us.* But eſpecially you may ſee in *Wiſd.* 2. (though the Booke be Apocryphall) what is the counſell and conceit of the wicked about the oddeneſſe and ſingularitie of the Saints: *Let us defraud the righteous* (ſay the wicked) *for hee is not for our profit, and hee is contrarie to our doings; hee checketh us for offending againſt the Law, and blameth us as tranſgreſſors of Diſcipline; hee maketh his boaſt to have the knowledge of God, and hee calleth himſelfe the ſonne of the Lord: Hee is made to reprove our thoughts. It grieveth us alſo to looke upon him: for his life is not like other mens, his wayes are of another faſhion; hee counteth us as baſtards, and hee withdraweth himſelfe from our wayes, as from filthineſſe; hee commendeth greatly the latter end of the juſt, and boaſteth that God is his father.* *Pſal.* 71. 7. & 79. 4.

Thus, as Gods children and godly men are indeed more excellent than their neighbours; and ſingular, in reſpect of their ſanctification and ſinceritie; ſo they are ſcorned and reviled by the World, and the greater part of men, as odde fellowes, and ſuch as muſt have wayes by themſelves, and a tricke above others. They are pointed at, as matter of ſcorne and contempt; they are ſet up, as markes of ſlander and oppreſſion;

and gazed upon, as ſtrange creatures. *Wee are made* (ſayth *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. meaning himſelfe, and other of Gods faithfull ſervants) *a gazing-ſtocke unto the World, and to the Angels, and to men.* And no marvell though it be ſo: For, beſides that all prophane and unregenerate men are naturally ineagered, and inraged with implacable malice and hatred againſt Gods Children; they are, in all places, but few in number; which makes them more noted, and pointed at.

1 *Cor.* 4. 9.

Gods children are but few.

That they are but few; beſides many certaine demonſtrative Reaſons out of Scripture; it may thus plainely appeare: as a good Divine tells us.

1 Firſt, let there be taken from amongſt us, all Papiſts, Atheiſts, and ſcorners of godlineſſe, and Religion.

2 Secondly, let there be removed all notorious and infamous evill livers; as Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Vſurers, Worldlings, Deceivers, proud perſons, prophaners of the Sabbath, Gameſters, and all the prophane and ignorant multitude.

3 Thirdly, let all thoſe be paſſed over, that are but onely civill honeſt men, and meddle not with any profeſſion, or practiſe of holineſſe; without which, no man muſt ſee God.

4 Fourthly, ſet aſide all groſſe Hypocrites; who for advantage, or by-reſpects, are outwardly religious, but inwardly corrupt, hollow-hearted, and abominable.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, let there be ſorted out and rejected all carnall Proteſtants, formall Profeſſors, backſliders, cold and unzealous Chriſtians; who falſely thinke, that they may both enjoy the World, and a good Conſcience too; live pleaſantly on Earth, and yet ſave their ſoules at laſt; and, that it is not neceſſarie to hold any ſuch ſtrict courſe of holineſſe, to come to Heaven. Let all theſe kinde of men, I ſay, (all which in one meaſure, or other, are in the ſtate of death, and under the power of Sathan) be ſeparated and ſhoaled out; and how many doe you thinke will remaine amongſt us, ſound, ſincere, faithfull, and zealous profeſſors, and practiſers of ſaving Truth, the power of Grace, and holy Obedience to all Gods Commandements? For ſuch onely are Gods ſervants, and in the ſtate of Grace. Let a man come into any Towne, Village, Citie, or Corporation, and let all ſuch men as are before mentioned, be removed; and how many ſhould he finde of theſe laſt? They would certainely be thinne ſcattered, and like the Grapes after the gathering of the Vintage, two or three in the top of the upmoſt boughes, and foure or five in the high branches. Singularitie then of ſanctification, is no fruit of Pride, but an inſeparable marke and neceſſarie ſtate of true Chriſtianitie. 5

I come now to a third ground, whence Sathan may rayſe a temptation to privie Pride: When a man is faithfull, and diligent, in the diſcharge and executions of his civill calling; 3 Sathan tempts to Pride, by a diſtaſting of a mans particular calling.

hee may caſt a conceit into his head, that ſuch baſe, earthly, and worldly imployment, and ſpending his time, is diſgracefull and derogatorie to the providence of God, and his Chriſtian libertie; and, that it hinders him in his calling of Chriſtianitie, and duties of Religion. Whence may follow dangerous effects of ſpirituall Pride; quite leaving, or neglect, diſcontent or diſtaſte of his civill calling. And ſo his heart and affections may bee put quite out of order, and deceive themſelves, in the very maine point of making towards Heaven.

4 From Gods providence.

Sathan, by his ſubtill malice, may worke out matter and occaſion of ſpirituall Pride, from the ſpeciall providence of God, conducting the Chriſtian the beſt and the neereſt way to Heaven. To give example, in ſome particulars.

Examples in particular.

1 When God, out of his great wiſedome and mercie, humbles him with afflictions and prickes, the ſwelling of his Pride; when hee cuts and loppes away his vanities, exceſſes, and ſuperfluities, with ſome viſitation, or other; and fills him with bitterneſſe in this life, to the end hee might long for the life to come: Why then, Sathan labours mightily to kindle in his corrupt nature a flaſh of ſpirituall Pride, that hee may drive him to grumbling and impatiencie, and ſo make Gods fatherly corrections and chaſtiſements fruitleſſe and unprofitable to him; which in Gods children ſhould ever worke amendment and comfort.

1

2 When

2 When the true Chriſtian lookes about him in the World, and ſees the wicked ſpreading themſelves like greene Bay-trees, in worldly plentie, and pleaſures; Sathan here thruſts in, and labours to caſt into his minde a conſideration of his owne worth; and that, how in reſpect of the wicked, he farre more, and rather, deſerves the fruition and enjoyment of the creatures, and benefits and comforts of this life: becauſe all wicked men are but uſurpers, and intruders; himſelfe being a true owner, by the right of Chriſt Ieſus, Lord of the whole Earth: And that, whereas he ſtands for the glory, ſervice, cauſes, and children of God; the wicked labour for nothing more, than the diſgrace and ruine of goodneſſe, and the upholding and enlargement of the Kingdome of Sathan. From ſuch conceits as theſe, mixed with ſpirituall, hee eaſily drawes him on to fretting and repining at the proſperitie of the wicked men, and puts him into one of *Davids* fits, and pangs, *Pſal.* 73. 12. *Loe* (ſayth hee) *theſe are the wicked, yet proſper they alway, and encreaſe in riches: Certainely, I have cleanſed my heart in vaine, and waſhed my hands in innocencie.* Or, at leaſt, brings him to queſtion with God; as it is, *Ier.* 12. *O Lord, if I diſpute with thee, thou art righteous; yet let mee talke with thee, of thy Iudgements: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? Why are all they in wealth, that rebelliouſly tranſgreſſe? Thou haſt planted them, and they have taken root; they grow, and bring forth fruit.* 2 *Pſal.*73.12. *Ier.*12.1,2.

3 When the Chriſtian doth preſently ſeele, or after call to minde Gods great mercies, gracious preventions, ſtrange protection, wonderfull deliverances, againſt expectation, and beyond hope, vouchſafed unto him in his direction and conduction towards the glory that is to be revealed; then doth Sathan buſily blow the Bellowes of his corrupt nature with the poyſonous breath of his helliſh malice, that ſo hee may puffe him up with ſpirituall Pride, and exalt him out of meaſure.

4 When he beholds and obſerves ſome ſudden deſtruction, or fearefull judgement, to overtake and ſeize upon his enemies; Sathan may ſecretly ſollicite him, out of a ſpice of ſpirituall Pride, to applaud and pleaſe himſelfe in the ruine and miſerie of his adverſarie: which, beſides the tainture of impietie, taſtes deepely alſo of inhumanitie, and is quite croſſe and contrarie to the practice and proteſtation of holy *Iob*, *Chap.* 31. In that Chapter, hee imprecates and invocates upon himſelfe many fearefull Curſes, if hee hath done ſo, or ſo. *Let mine arme* (ſaith he) *fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and let mine arme be broken from the bones*, if I have done ſuch and ſuch things. And after followes: *If I rejoyced at his deſtruction that hated me; or was moved to joy, when evill came upon him; or if I have ſuffered my mouth to ſtreake evill of him, or to utter Curſes againſt him.*

Iob 31. 22. 29.

5 When the Chriſtian is ſadly and heavily muſing upon his many troubles and diſtreſſes, which many times come thicke and three-fold upon

upon him, as fast and boisterously, as one wave overtakes another; so that he findes one vexation to be still a step unto another: Sathan then hee puts in, and seeing the season advantageous for his feats, and insinuations, workes what he can to make him take on; and out of a proud conceit of better deservings, to be wearie of waiting the Lords leisure; and out of the anguishes and agonies of his heart, to wish and desire death; especially to be rid and freed from those crosses and calamities, which unworthily haunt and persecute his innocencie. Holy *Iob* was strongly assayled with this temptation, *Chap.* 3. when hee cryed and said: *Let the day perish wherein I was borne; and the night, when it was said, there is a man-child conceived, &c.* And so was the Prophet *Ionah*, *Chap.* 4. *Therefore now* (saith he) *O Lord, take I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die, than to live.* *Iob* 3. 3. *Ionah* 4. 3.

6 Sometimes, when the Christian is crossed and disappointed in his expectation, God wisely and sweetly diverting, moderating, and disposing all things to his owne glory, and to the true good of his children (though they doe not presently see, and acknowledge it;) Sathan steps in, and by the secret and insensible poyson of privie Pride, labours to suggest unto him, that he is prejudiced and disgraced; that so by his inward fretting, hee may make it plainely appeare, that hee preferres his owne particular credit, before the glory of God. Thus was *Ionas* tempted, in *Chap.* 4. Fearefull destruction was denounced by him from 6

God, againſt the Ninivites: They put on ſack-cloth, humbled themſelves, and repented; God ſtayes his hand, forbeares his Iudgements, which were proclaymed by *Ionah*: Therefore (ſayth the Text) *that diſpleaſed Ionah exceedingly, and hee was angrie; and hee prayed unto the Lord, and ſaid, &c.*

5 Sathan makes men to pride themſelves in their abilities and gifts.

When hee begins to obſerve, and admire himſelfe for ſome ſpeciall acceptation in Chriſtian companie; for his abilities to pray, conferre, diſcover temptations, and the Devils depths; to preſſe an holy preciſeneſſe, and mortifying points, &c. Oh then, too often a wide gap is opened in his deceitfull heart, for the Devils wild-fire of ſpirituall Pride. So that many times, an humble ſilent ſoule doth quickly out-ſtrip ſuch an one, doting dangerouſly upon his preſent perfections, in the ſubſtantialls of Chriſtianitie.

Thus, and many moe wayes, doth Sathan labour by privie Pride, to weaken the power of Grace, and efficacie of the Word; to ſtaine and diſgrace the beſt Graces and godlieſt actions; to grieve the good Spirit, and coole their firſt Love, even in Gods children; after that, by the helpe of God, they have ſtruggled through other temptations, and obtained much ſpirituall peace and Chriſtian perfection in the doctrine of ſalvation, and wayes of godlineſſe.

Preſervatives againſt ſpirituall Pride.

Before I paſſe from this point, I would propoſe ſome remedies againſt this ſwelling ſpirituall maladie of privie Pride, and ſome ſoveraigne conſiderations, to keepe downe the Chriſtian heart, and

and to preſerve it in the ſweet and peacefull ſtate of a gracious humilitie.

1 Meditate upon Gods pure eyes.

First then, let every Chriſtian, when hee firſt feeles any over-weening conceit, or proud perſwaſion of his owne worth, and ſpirituall graces, ſtealing into his heart; lift up the eyes of his minde, in a divine meditation, unto thoſe brighteſt and pureſt eyes of God Almightie; which are ten thouſand times brighter than the Sunne, and purer than puritie it ſelfe: ſo that they ſee the leaſt and ſecreteſt infirmitie in its true and native foulenesſe; and before them, our beſt righteouſneſſe is as a menſtruous clout. If he ſoundly and ſincerely entertaine this conſideration, it will ſo humble him, and keepe him under, that he will rather be affrighted and ſurprized with feare and terror, for his many frailties and infirmities, than be lifted up with a conceit of his graces, and ſpirituall endowments.

Iſa. 64. 6.

2 Vpon Gods infinite perfection.

When hee begins once proudly and ſelfe-conceitedly to gaze upon that little ſparke of holineſſe hee findes in himſelfe; let him preſently turne backe the edge and eye of this dangerous ſpeculation, upon the infinite puritie and endleſſe perfection of God Almightie; before whom, the Cherubins and Seraphins, the Crowne of Gods workemanſhip, and the glory of creatures, doe hide and cover their faces, as not able to behold and endure the perfect brightneſſe of his moſt pure and undefiled Majeſtie. In whoſe ſight, the unſtained ſplendour of the Heavens, and the glorious beautie of the Starres are uncleane, and foule;

Iſa. 6. 2.

foule; darkeneſſe, and deformitie. The Sunne, the faireſt Body in the World, made all of beautie and brightneſſe; if it were put neere unto that unacceſſible and incomprehenſible Light, which encompaſſeth the Lord of Heaven, it would vaniſh away as a darkeſome Moat, and Lumpe of Vanitie. Nay, in reſpect of God, thoſe divine and heavenly creatures, the bleſſed Angels, pure and immateriall ſpirits, are chargeable with folly and vanitie. *Behold, he found no ſtedfaſtneſſe in his Saints; yea, the Heavens are not cleare in his ſight. How much more is man abominable and filthie, which drinketh iniquitie like water?* *Iob* 15.15,16. What art thou then, wretched man, that carrieſt about thee a Body of death? Shall not his excellencie make thee afraid, and his feare fall upon thee? *Behold* (ſaith *Iob*) *he will give no light unto the Moone, and the Starres are uncleane in his ſight: How much more man, a Worme; even the ſonne of a man, which is but a Worme? Behold, he found no ſtedfaſtneſſe in his ſervants, and laid folly upon his Angels: How much more in them that dwell in Houſes of Clay, whoſe foundation is in the Duſt, which ſhall be deſtroyed before the Moth?* These conſiderations are able to confound and caſt downe below the Earth, and Duſt, the greateſt admirer and applauder of himſelfe, for his graces, good actions, and ſpirituall perfections.

Iob 25.5.

Iob 4.18.

Iob 25.5,6.

Iob 4.18.

3 Compare thy ſelfe with other Chriſtians.

When the Chriſtian is tempted to a proud conceit of his ſpirituall ſufficiencies; let him compare himſelfe with other Saints of God: which (perhaps) having beene leſſe ſinners than himſelfe,

himſelfe, in the time of their unregeneration; and having leſſe meanes, parts, occaſions, and encouragements to glorifie God: yet excell him in zeale, ſanctification, and the ſervice of God. *Paul*, that great Doctor of the Gentiles, and glorious Angell upon Earth, for all his ſpirituall bleſſings, and incomparable graces, cryes out, *Rom.7.24. Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* *David*, a man after Gods owne heart, and a ſpeciall royall Mirror for varietie of ſpirituall excellencies, is ſo farre from being proud of his graces; that hee is every where complaining of the burthen of his ſinnes, ſpirituall povertie and want, and the miſeries of his ſoule: *There is no health in my fleſh,* (ſaith he) *becauſe of thy diſpleaſure; neither is there any reſt in my bones, by reaſon of my ſinne: for my wickednesſes are gone over my head, and are like a ſore burthen, too heavie for me to beare.* For his reputation in the World, he tells us; *that he was a Worme, and no man; a very ſcorne of men, and out-caſt of the people.* In all times, the beſt Chriſtians have ever beene moſt ſenſible of the weight of their ſinnes, and corruption of their nature; and from thence, entertained a lowly conceit of themſelves. Where there is the greateſt meaſure of ſanctification, there is ever the greateſt humilitie. If thoſe then that be indeed in the higheſt favour with God, leſſer ſinners than our ſelves, and moſt ſanctified, be of an humble and lowly minde, of *a meeke and quiet ſpirit, which is before God a thing much ſet by,* 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. let us take heed how we be proud of

Rom.7.24.

Pſal.38.3.

Pſal.22.6.

1 *Pet.3.4.*

of thoſe graces; which, if we looke for Gods bleſſing upon them, and comfort from them, muſt bring forth in us humilitie and thankefulneſſe.

4 Compare thy ſelfe with Gods holy Law.

Let him compare, and examine, and meaſure himſelfe, his wayes, and workes, by the Law of God; and hee ſhall there finde much matter of humiliation, repentance, feare, and trembling, with continuall ſupply in abundance miniſtred unto him: ſo that there ſhall be no roome left for any proud and over-weening conceit of any good thing in him. That elect Veſſell, and great Apoſtle, after he was regenerate, (for the unregenerate feele no ſuch ſtrife) found ſuch a vaſt and wide diſtance betweene the Law, and his owne affections, and beſt workes; that for horror thereof, he cryed out; *Oh miſerable man, that I am!* What ſpirituall good then is there in any of us, miſerable wretches, wherein we ſhould glory? Let our beſt workes be as glorious as we can imagine, let them be performed with never ſo great integritie and reſolution, cover them with grace, derive them from the Holy-Ghoſt, dippe and dye them deepe in the bloud of Chriſt, put upon them all the rich attire, and Papall magnificence, with which the Church of Rome hath inveſted them; yet to the pureſt eyes of God, and in the cleare Cryſtall of his undefiled Law, they appeare to be foule, and ſpotted; impure, and like a menſtruous clout. The meaſuring then of our ſelves by the Law and Word of God, is a notable meanes to keepe us in humilitie, and to make us *worke out our ſalvation with feare and trembling.* Phil. 2. 12.

Let

Let him conſider, what a foule and wretched, what a damned and an accurſed creature hee had beene; had not his gracious God, out of the unſearchable depth of his infinite goodneſſe and mercie, ſingled him out to be his ſervant upon Earth, and a Saint in Heaven. It was onely Gods free mercie, that before all eternitie, by the great Decree of his eternall election, marked him out for Heaven and endleſſe joyes, from amidſt the huge maſſe of all mankind. It was the ſame, that after cauſed him to ſend his owne and onely Sonne, out of his owne Boſome, and height of Majeſty; that with his deareſt and precious bloud, hee might redeeme his Soule from the ſnares of Hell, into which hee was fallen, by *Adams* fall: which in due time, by the inward, ſpeciall, and effectuall power of his unſpotted Spirit, called him into his Kingdome of Grace, waſhed him, juſtified, and ſanctified him, in the Name of the Lord Ieſus. Elſe, otherwiſe, had not theſe everlaſting and unconceivable Bleſſings beene caſt upon him, by Gods free meere mercie, without all cauſe or motive from man, or any other created thing, out of his infinite Selfe; his caſe had beene unſpeakably woſull: For he ſhould have lived in this Vale of Teares, without God, without Grace, without Comfort, without Conſcience; in Sinne, in Darkeneſſe, in Prophaneneſſe, in all Spirituall Miſeries: And after the cloſure and period of theſe *few and evill dayes*, he ſhould have beene endleſſely divided and abandoned from the joyes and comforts of Gods preſence, inchained

5 Conſider what thou hadſt beene, if God had left thee to thy ſelfe.

inchained without all redemption, to deſpaire and horror, and the hatefull fellowſhip of the Devill and his Angels: and (that which is the extremitie and upſhot of all helliſh miſerie) hee ſhould have had the fierce and horrible wrath and vengeance of God poured in full meaſure upon his body and ſoule; which would have fed upon them, as fire doth upon Pitch and Brimſtone, for ever and ever. Out of theſe conſiderations, mee thinkes a man ſhould rather with humilitie and thankefulneſſe admire and magnifie the mercies of God, that hee is not alreadie a Fire-brand in Hell; than any wayes be puffed up with any worthineſſe in himſelfe, or dote upon his owne nothingneſſe.

6 Conſider the fearfull effects of Pride.

When a Chriſtian is tempted to ſpirituall Pride; let him deepely and thorowly weigh with himſelfe, what fearefull inconveniences and diſcomforts will enſue, if hee give way to ſuch temptations: For ſo, many follow, in the courſe of Gods juſt judgement, upon ſpirituall Vanitie, and Pride; dullneſſe, and deadneſſe of heart; a reſtraint of the influence of the Spirit; a diminution and leſſening, or a ſlumber and ceſſation of the operations of grace, a cooling of zeale, and falling from the firſt Love. Or, when hee ſees us ſo preſumptuouſly to truſt to our ſtrength, and ſtay our ſelves with our owne ſtaffe; he may quite give us over, in ſome great temptation, to ſome groſſe ſinne; ſo that we may take the foile in the Conflict. And then, if wee once be over-taken with the old ſweet ſinne of our unregeneration,

or be enſnared with ſome new notorious tranſgreſſion; wee muſt of neceſſitie, to our great diſcomfort, enter againe the agonies of Soule, anguiſh of Conſcience, and horror of Hell; wee muſt enter combate againe with all the powers of Darkeneſſe; wee muſt have our regeneration, regenerated; our new-birth, new-borne; and the precious bloud of the Sonne of God, as it were, ſhed for us againe. Wee turne thereby Gods favourable countenance from us, and the hearts and affections of true Chriſtians: wee put againe a ſting into our owne Conſciences, and weapons into the hands of Sathan, to vexe, wound, and torment us: wee barre and bereave our ſelves of Gods gracious protection, of the guard of Angels, of peace of Conſcience, of joy in the Holy-Ghoſt, of boldneſſe in our wayes, of reconciliation in the creatures, and of all the comforts of godlineſſe. As a man tenders the preſervation of his Soule, from all theſe ſpirituall miſeries; let him take heed of entertaining a proud and over-weening conceit of his owne graces, gifts, or good actions.

7 The more a man hath, the more he is accountable for.

Let him conſider, that the more ſpirituall gifts and graces he hath received from the free mercie of God, the more will be required at his hands. Me thinkes, this ſhould coole and allay any ſwelling conceit, or proud perſwaſion, that may ariſe in the heart; and not ſuffer a man to play with them, and dote upon them, or give him any leiſure, with an over-weening and ſelfe-conceited flatterie, to gaze upon them, or to applaud and admire them

them in himſelfe, as though they were his owne; but rather, with all vigilancie and ſolicitouſneſſe, with all care and good Conſcience, to occupie and imploy them for his Maſters greateſt advantage.

There is no gift or good thing in any man, either of Nature or Grace, of body or minde, of wealth or honour, of reputation or authoritie in the World; but he muſt give ſhortly a ſtrict and exact account of the uſage and imployment of it, before the impartiall and uncorrupted Tribunall of Heaven: And the more excellent his gifts and endowments have beene in any kind, he ſhall in proportion be anſwerable, and countable for the more. If the Lord hath enlightened, heated, and inſpired any one with much ſaving knowledge, with a great meaſure of zeale, with a high Chriſtian courage, and reſolution; he lookes and expects for great gaine of glory unto himſelfe, many ſpoyles and conqueſts over his enemies, a blazing and exemplarie brightneſſe, in holineſſe of life; much beautie and luſtre to the Church, much good and comfort unto Chriſtians: For much is required of them, to whom much is committed. Luke 12. 48.

Let a man then not labour to make himſelfe glorious, by thoſe graces which are none of his owne; but how, by glorifying God with them, in humilitie, faithfulneſſe, and ſinceritie, and by improving and making the beſt of them, for the Owners advantage, hee may make a comfortable account at that great Day.

Thus

Thus farre I have propoſed unto you ſome Motives, to quicken and ſtirre you up to a conſcionable and conſtant hearing and underſtanding of the holy Word of God; and acquainted you with many ſleights, lets, and temptations, which Sathan uſually caſts in our way, to hinder us therein.

Now, in a third place, I will lay downe unto you certaine rules, directions, and inſtructions, for your right, holy, and conſcionable carriage, behaviour, and importment, in and about the hearing of Gods Word.

That the holy Word of God may be unto you the Word of Grace, the ſavour of Life unto Life, of power unto ſanctification and ſalvation; you muſt looke carefully and conſcionably unto your preparation, before you come; unto your carriage, while you are there; and unto your behaviour, afterward.

First, for Preparation.

1 Preparation required to profitable hearing.

I am perſwaded, the want and neglect of a due and profitable preparation, is the cauſe that thouſands receive no benefit or bleſſing by the Word of Life; but that the Sermons they heare, are regiſtred, as in a Table of Remembrance, before God, as ſo many witneſſes againſt them, for their more fearefull confuſion and greater condemnation at the Day of Accounts.

For want of preparation, the Word becomes to men,

1 The ſavour of death unto death.

1 For hence it is, that to many it is the ſavour of death unto death; becauſe, before they come, they doe not addreſſe and prepare themſelves for ſo glorious a Preſence, and royall Embaſſage

from the King of Heaven: though they heare it with their outward eares, yet it hardens their hearts, makes them inwardly more peeviſh, grumbling, ſtubborne, rebellious, and refractarie to the power thereof, and prepares and ripens them for more heavie vengeance. It is of it ſelfe the Word of Grace, Salvation, and Life; a bleſſed preſervative againſt Sinne and Death, Damnation and Hell: but by accident, if men doe not reverence it, tremble at it, and ſubmit themſelves to the power of it, it is a ſtrong Hammer, and Iron Scepter, to harden their hearts more and more, like an Anvile, or Adamant; and at length, to breake them in pieces like a Potters Veſſell. Though in it ſelfe, it be a ſaving and wholeſome Medicine; yet men of a rebellious and ſtubborne humour and temper, turne it into Poyſon.

2 As Seed in the high way ground.

2 To ſome, this holy Word, by reaſon of unpreparedneſſe, is but as the water ſpilt upon the ground, and the breath of the Miniſter ſcattered in the Aire: If you call them to an account, after Sermon, how they have profited; they are as wordleſſe, and witleſſe, and indeed as graceleſſe in repetition, as if they had beene deafe, aſleepe, in a trance, or ſtarke dead all the while.

3 Men are made but onely formall by it.

3 Others, by their raſh and prophane ruſhing into the Houſe of God, without all premeditation, reverence, or regard of that holy buſineſſe they goe about; become hearers onely, of forme and cuſtome, for faſhion and companie. It may be, they may heare, attend, and underſtand what is delivered; but it breedes no more reverence, im-

impreſſion, or ſpirituall reformation, than an ordinarie Tale, or humane diſcourſe: As though that holy toyle, and ſacred breath, were ſpent onely to entertaine the Time, and buſie mens eares for an Houre; and, not as Chriſt tells *Paul*, *To open their eyes, that they might turne from Darkeneſſe unto Light, and from the power of Sathan unto God.*

4 Vpon ſome, the Iudgement and Curſe of comming without Conſcience, and due preparation, doth ſo farre prevaile, and hath ſuch power, that they become ſcorners and raylers againſt the Miniſter, or his Doctrine, or both; at every Sermon they catch ſomething, that they may cavill at, deprave, and calumniate: And ſo, wickedly and wretchedly oppoſe their diſcourſe, wit, and ſpirit of contradiction againſt the face of Heaven, and heart of Divine Truth. They wrangle and repine (in deed and truth, whatſoever their pretences or proteſtations may be to the contrarie) againſt that Great Majeſtie, whoſe Meſſage it is; againſt that Holy Spirit, which ſhould ſanctifie them; and the Word of Grace, which ſhould ſave them.

4 Some become ſcorners.

5 Others there be, even of good hearts and affections, Profeſſors, and in ſome good meaſure practiſers of the power of godlineſſe; yet becauſe they are careleſſe and neglective of this needfull Chriſtian dutie of preparation, are poſſeſſed with much deadneſſe of heart, and dullneſſe of ſpirit, at thoſe holy Exerciſes. Their zeale, and fervencie, which ſhould be quickened

5 Others are cold and dead-hearted.

and inflamed at every Sermon, is dulled and benummed with ſenſeleſneſſe and ſatietie: They doe not ſo tremble, or are caſt downe with Divine Comminations and denouncements of Gods Iudgements againſt ſinne, or ſo refreſhed with the gracious promiſes of Life, and Salvation, as they ought to be: They doe not enjoy and reape the thouſandth part of that delight, comfort, and benefit as they well might, by the Miniſterie of the Word, becauſe their hearts are not purged and prepared: They doe not with that cheareſulneſſe receive, with that ſweetneſſe taſte and relliſh, with that life and vigour diſgeſt the Food of Life: The eye of their minde, for want of premeditation, doth not ſo clearely ſee and diſcerne the infinite beautie of that ſacred Majeſtie repreſented unto them, or that glorious grace ſhining unto them, in the face of CHRIST IESVS: Their hand of Faith doth not with that feeling, and faſtneſſe, lay hold upon and claſpe about, the rich Treaſures revealed in the Goſpell. In a word, they bereave themſelves of much good, bleſſing, comfort, and growth in grace, which they might and ought to have, by hearing of the Word, for want of due preparing, and diſpoſing the heart thereto.

This dutie of Preparation then, though that it be not much thought upon, or ordinarily practiſed; yet it is of great neceſſitie and ſpeciall uſe for all thoſe, which looke for benefit or bleſſing by the preaching of the Word.

There

Preparation requiſite in civill affaires, much more to the hearing of the Word.

There is no great Affaire, or of weight and conſequence, eyther in Nature or Art, in neceſſarie buſineſſes and civill Negotiations, or in matters of Complement, Ceremonie, and Enterview; but there is required ſome bethinking preparation and præ-diſpoſitions, for the more happie and ſucceſſefull accompliſhment, execution, and performance: how much more in the affaires of God, matters of Heaven, buſineſſes of eternitie, and ſalvation of mens ſoules?

The Ground muſt be manured and prepared for the Seed, if wee looke it ſhould fructifie and proſper: how much more ſhould our dull and dead hearts bee ſtirred up, and furrowed, as it were, with humiliation, reverence, and repentance; that by the grace of God, and the ſanctifying power of the Spirit, it may lodge and take deepe root in them, and ſpring up to eternall life?

The Body muſt be fitted with a Preparative, and the humours, as it were, gathered unto a head, if wee deſire the Phyſicke ſhould worke forcibly and kindly, and rid us of their noxiouſneſſe, and ſuperfluitie: how much more ought our Soules, with an impartiall and narrow inquiſition, to be ſearched and layd open, before they receive the Water of Life, and ſpirituall Manna; that ſo they may more ſeaſonably and ſoundly be waſhed and purged from corruptions and imperfections, preſerved in ſpirituall health, and prepared for eternall life?

The Ground muſt be layd, and ſome imperfect

Draughts, Shadowes, and reſemblances premiſed, before a Picture can be done to the Life, or a full proportion and lively repreſentation pourtrayed or preſented to the eye; how much more ought the ground of our hearts to be fitted and prepared, that by the preaching of the Word, the Image of Chriſt Ieſus may with a lively and freſh impreſſion be ſtamped upon them?

Were a man the next day to goe about a buſineſſe that mainely concerned eyther his life, or livelyhood; the ſtate of his Lands, or danger of his life: Would not his minde be troubled before-hand? Would it not breake his ſleepe the night before? Would he not be muſing, and plotting, by what meanes he might worke out his deliverance, and ſafetie? what behaviour and carriage might be fitteſt, to winne favour and grace in ſo weightie an affaire? How much more ought wee, before wee intrude into the Houſe of God, where matters of our greateſt and higheſt intereſt, are propoſed, handled, and debated by the Miniſter of the Word; even life eternall, and everlaſting eſtate in another World? I ſay, how ought wee to thinke with our ſelves, how wee may make our ſoules fitteſt to underſtand and accept the Covenant of Grace, to receive the Seale of the Spirit, and to get aſſurance of that glorious and royall Inheritance in the Heavens?

Nay, yet further, even in matters of complement and enterview, there is wont to be preparation, eſpecially if the preſence and perſons were the greater.

Ioſeph,

Ioſeph, when he was ſent for to goe before King *Pharoah*, hee ſhaved his head, and changed his rayment, becauſe hee was to appeare before ſo high and royall a preſence. *Gen.41.14.*

Queene *Heſter* durſt not preſſe into the preſence of King *Ahaſhueroſh*, before ſhee had prepared her ſelfe. *Heſt.5.1.*

How much more ought wee to fit and prepare our ſelves, baſe and miſerable wretches, Wormes and no men, as wee are, with feare and trembling, when wee come into the Houſe and preſence of the mightie Lord of Heaven and Earth; before whom, *the Seraphins hide their faces, the Nations are as a drop of a Bucket, and the inhabitants of the Earth as Graſſe-hoppers:* eſpecially, ſith there hee offers and tenders unto us enlargement from the ſlaverie of ſinne, purgation from our pollutions, and a Crowne of life, upon that condition, that wee repent, forſake all our ſinnes, and reſigne up our ſelves in ſincere and humble obedience unto all his Commandements? *Iſa.40.*

Inducements we have, and Motives many, both from Precept, and Practice, in the Booke of God, for the performance of this Chriſtian dutie of Preparation.

Motives to Preparation.
1
Precepts out of the Word for it.
1

Take heed to thy foot (ſayth the Preacher) *when thou entereſt into the Houſe of God, and be more neere to heare, than to give the ſacrifice of fooles; for they know not that they doe evill.* *Eccleſ.4.17.*

Before thou ſet foot into the Church, to heare the Word of God, be ſure to ſettle thy affections, that they be ſober, moderate, and ſanctified,

fit to entertaine the Word of life, and ſalvation; let thy heart be ſeaſoned with, firſt, Softneſſe; ſecondly, Humilitie; thirdly, Honeſtie; fourthly, Faith; fifthly, Teachableneſſe.

Before wee heare, our hearts muſt be qualified with,

1 Softneſſe.

Firſt, if thou doe not preſerve thy heart tender, ſoft, and flexible, the power of the Word will not make any ſuch print or deepe impreſſion upon it; all holy admonitions, reproofes, and inſtructions, will be unto thee as Arrowes ſhot againſt a Stone wall.

2 Humilitie. *Iam.4.6.* *Pſal.25.9.*

Secondly, wee muſt bring with us an humble heart, to the hearing of the Word; for, *the Lord reſiſts the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Them that be meeke, will he guide in judgement, and teach the humble his way.* The proud heart is ſo ſwelled with the winde of vanitie and vaine-glory, of ſelfe-love, and over-weening conceit, that there is left no roome in it for the precious Treaſure of ſaving grace. If it eyther be puffed up with a conceit of knowledge, or a perſwaſion of holineſſe enough, or a boiſterous peremptorineſſe againſt the power of the Word; the Water of Life will be unto it, but as Water poured upon a drowned man; or as a Seale thruſt upon Water, which will receive no impreſſion. A lowly heart, broken and bruiſed with Conſcience of ſinne, is a fit Seat for the mightie Lord and his ſaving graces, *Iſa.57.15.*

Iſa.57.15.

3 Honeſtie.

Thirdly, wee muſt come with a good and honeſt heart; which hateth all corruptions, both in it ſelfe, and others; which hath no delight in any ſinfull pleaſures, or wicked vanities; which hath

no

no manner of purpoſe to live and continue in any one ſinne whatſoever; but is readie and reſolved, though it be much cumbred with it owne corruptions, the Worlds enticements, and Sathans craftineſſe; yet to ſerve and pleaſe God, in all the wayes of his Commandements, and that ſincerely and continually. All profitable and fruitfull hearers have ſuch good and honeſt hearts, and are reſembled by the good ground, *Luke* 8. 15. But that is a wicked and ſinfull heart, and not fit to be wrought upon by the Miniſterie of the Word, which purpoſeth and reſolveth to cheriſh and maintaine but any one ſinne whatſoever. *Luke 8.15.*

Fourthly, our hearts muſt be ſeaſoned with Faith; otherwiſe, it will not ſinke and ſoake into them with power and profit. The old Iewes heard the Word, but *it profited them not, becauſe it was not mingled with faith in thoſe that heard it*, *Heb.4.2.* The fearefull threatnings and thunderbolts of the Law, by Faith receive an edge to wound, and pierce and ſtrike through our ſoules, with amazements and trembling. And Faith it is, that animates and inſpires the promiſes of the Goſpel with ſuch a ſoveraigne ſweetneſſe, and powerfull comfort; that they are able, not onely to rayſe and revive us from the depth and extremitie of remorſe, and feare; but alſo to put us into a Paradiſe of ſpirituall pleaſures, and poſſeſſion of Heaven, as it were alreadie. But if the Word light upon a faithleſſe heart, it dyes, it does no good. 4 Faith. *Heb.4.2.*

Fifthly, wee muſt bring with us into the Lords Sanctuarie, 5 Teachableneſſe.

Sanctuarie, teachable and hearing hearts, that will willingly and readily open themſelves, to receive the Lord of glory, with whatſoever hee ſhall reveale unto us out of his holy Word. *Sacrifice and burnt offerings* (ſayth *David*) *thou wouldeſt not, but mine eares haſt thou prepared.* As if hee ſhould have ſaid: Thou haſt bored new eares in my heart, that I can now reverently attend unto, rightly conceive, and with an holy greedineſſe devoure the myſterie of grace.

Pſal.40.6.

With ſuch hearts as theſe, muſt wee come to the hearing of the Word, if wee looke that it ſhould be unto us a Word of power, ſalvation, and life; and not to be of the number of thoſe, that offer the ſacrifice of fooles, and yet know not that they doe evill.

Many there are certainely, which offer theſe fooliſh ſacrifices; I meane, hearers, without care and conſcience: Who, if they come into the Houſe of God, and vouchſafe their preſence in the place, and lend their eares to the Preacher for the time; they thinke themſelves preſently jolly fellowes, for matters of Religion; and that they are ſanctified, as it were, by the Worke wrought, and their onely preſence in that holy place: when as yet the Word hath had no more power, nor wrought more alteration upon them, than upon the Seats where they ſate.

And that which makes theſe fooles much more miſerable, and fooliſh, is this; *They know not that they doe evill:* as it is in the Text. They thinke their caſe good enough, that they are in the right courſe

courſe of Chriſtianitie; and that no more is required, for matters of Heaven: when as, in reſpect of ſaving grace, they are wretched, miſerable, and poore; and *blinde, and naked.* *Rev.* 3. 17.

Beſides this place of the *Preacher*, the Evangeliſt S. *Luke*, *Chap.* 8. 18. bids us, *take heed how wee heare.* And good reaſon, in a matter of ſuch great weight and conſequence. For there is not a Sermon wee heare, but wee muſt be countable for it at the Day of our Viſitation. God is countable unto us for every haire of our head; is it not reaſon, wee ſhould be countable to him for thoſe precious Leſſons he teacheth unto us by the Miniſterie of the Word? Aſſuredly, there is not a Sermon, which wee have heard fruitleſſely, and without profit, but it will be a ſhrewd and ſore witneſſe againſt us at that Day. 2 *Luke* 8. 18.

Beſides theſe Precepts, wee finde much practiſe in the Booke of God, of this holy dutie of Preparation, when any ſacred buſineſſe was to be undertaken. 2 Inſtances for the practice of Preparation.

Moſes could not approach ſo glorious and ſacred a Preſence, or tread upon the ground, made holy by ſo great a Majeſtie as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, before he had *put off his ſhooes.* Neither ought wee to preſume or preſſe into his Sanctuarie, where he hath promiſed his Preſence in a ſolemne, ſpeciall, and powerfull manner, and is readie to ſhower downe his bleſſings of ſalvation into all truly humble and prepared hearts; before wee have ſhaken off and caſt from us all earthly incumbrances, and ſecret corruptions, all dulneſſe and Moſes. *Exod.* 3. 5.

and deadneſſe of heart, whith makes us unworthy and undiſpoſed to ſtand upon ſo holy ground, and utterly uncapable of all that heavenly Wiſedome, and holy inſtructions unto eternall life, that are there taught, and tendred unto us; nay, turne the bleſſings of the Miniſtery into curſes and condemnation unto us.

IOSHVAH. *Joſh.* 3. 5. When *Ioſhuah* was to make a ſtrong and laſting impreſſion in the hearts of the Iſraelites (whom after the death of *Moſes*, he conducted to the promiſed Land) of the power and providence of God for his people, by that miraculous parting of the Waters of *Iordan*, for the tranſportation of the Arke; hee commanded the people to ſanctifie themſelves, to prepare, and compoſe their hearts; to admire and reverence with greater intention and amazement, that omnipotent Majeſty that wrought ſuch wonders for his choſen: For hearts emptied of worldly thoughts, and ſanctified by heavenly meditation, are fit ſubjects for workes of Heaven, and divine impreſſions. How much more ought we to prepare our ſouſes, before wee come into the Sanctuary of the Lord; ſith there, they are either to be hardned for the Scepter of deſtruction, and made ready for the flames of Hell, if wee doe not prepare our ſelves, hearken, and obey: or elſe, to be ſoftned and ſanctified with ſaving grace, and fitted for a Crowne of Glory; if with reverence, humility, and obedience, wee ſubmit our ſelves to the power of the Word? There, if wee be unconverted, the great and miraculous worke of the new-birth is to bee wrought

wrought upon them; if wee be new-borne, they are to be fed with the ſpirituall Manna, unto everlaſting life.

The ſame *Ioſhuah*, when the excommunicate and execrable thing was to be found out, and put from amongſt them; which was the cauſe, they could not ſtand againſt their enemies: he commanded them to ſanctifie themſelves, that the Lord might proſper and poure his bleſſings upon that neceſſarie and weightie ſearch and inquiſition. How much more ought wee to prepare our ſelves, before wee ſtep into the Houſe of God; ſith there is to be diſcovered and caſt out thoſe hatefull ſinnes that fearefully incenſe Gods wrath againſt us, and make us weake in the Lords battailes, and not able to ſtand againſt our ſpirituall enemies, the corruptions of our owne fleſh, the enticements of the World, and temptations of Sathan? *Joſu.7.13.*

Before the ſacrifice, and anointing of *David* King of Iſrael, *Iſhai* and his ſonnes were ſanctified: How much more ought wee to be prepared, before wee come before the Lords Prophets, and Embaſſadours; that there wee may be anointed *Kings and Prieſts unto our God?* SAMVEL. *1 Sam.16.5.* *Rev.5.10.*

Ioſiah, before the eating of the Paſchall Lambe, did bid the people, not onely ſanctifie themſelves, but alſo prepare their brethren: How much more ought wee, when wee come to the Miniſterie of the Word, to feede by faith upon that *true Bread from Heaven, which giveth life unto the world*; which if wee once ſoundly taſte with beleeIOSIAH. *2 Chro.35.6.* *Joh.6.*

beleeving hearts, wee ſhall not hunger, wee ſhall never thirſt?

The people, before the giving of the Law. Exod. 19. 10.

But the moſt famous and fitteſt place for my purpoſe, and preparation in that particular holy buſineſſe of hearing the Word, is that in *Exod.* 19. 10. *The people were ſanctified, and waſhed their clothes, and prepared themſelves for two dayes, and the third day they were readie to attend what the Lord would ſay unto them.* As in that extraordinarie promulgation of the Law, the people were to be prepared extraordinarily; ſo, from proportion of that practice, and precedencie, ordinarie preparation is neceſſarie for the ordinarie preaching of the Word, if wee looke that it ſhould powerfully and profitably worke upon our Conſciences and affections. Their *waſhing of their bodies, and clothes, their abſtinence from their wives*, and ſuch ſolemne and ceremonious purifications, were typicall ſignifications and repreſentations unto us, that wee ſhould weane our hearts from earthly thoughts, purge them from ſecret corruptions, and bring them faire and free, from ſinfull ſpot and worldly entanglement, when wee come to heare the Lord ſpeake unto us by his Miniſters.

Verſ. 15.

Holy men of God were wont, addreſſing themſelves to prayer, to have their ejaculations, lifting up of their hearts, certaine ſhort prayers, before they entred into that ſacred and ſolemne action.

3 The profit of it.

Beſides Precept and Practice in the Booke of God, for Preparation; the profit is great, the benefits and bleſſings that redound unto us, and

and fall upon us by it, are excellent and precious. Looke in the latter end of the eleventh Chapter of *Iob*.

If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him. Iob 11. 13.

If iniquitie be in thine hand, put it farre away, and let no wickedneſſe dwell in thy Tabernacle. 14.

Then truly ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot, and ſhalt be ſtable, and ſhalt not feare, &c. 15.

Preparation of the heart, is here the foundation and firſt ſtep unto many glorious bleſſings. The heart muſt be firſt prepared, before other holy duties can be fitly performed, or Gods bleſſings expected.

In the firſt place; firſt, prepare thine heart; ſecondly, then poure it out in prayer, before the Throne of Grace; thirdly, then purge it from corruption; baniſh farre, and barre out all iniquitie; fourthly, next, be ſure to reforme, inſtruct, and pray with thy family, or thoſe that are about thee: Let no wickedneſſe, ignorance, prophaneneſſe, ſwearing, ſwaggering, drunkenneſſe, or the like, dwell in thy Tabernacle, harbour in thine houſe, or rowſt neere thee.

And then open thy heart, and hands; for the Windowes of Heaven ſhall be ſet wide open, that all manner of ſpirituall comforts, all the bleſſings of peace and happineſſe, may in abundance be ſhowred downe upon thee; the rich Treaſurie of everlaſting Glory and Immortalitie ſhall be unlockt unto thee, and thou ſhalt row and tumble thy ſelfe for ever after, amid mountaines of heavenly

venly pearles, and golden pleaſures; through Rivers, nay Seas of endleſſe joyes, that no heart can comprehend, but that which is weaned from all worldly pleaſures, and ſet apart and ſanctified for holy ſervices and buſineſſes of Heaven.

Verſ. 15. *Then truly ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot.*] Though thou haſt lyen among the Pots, yet thou ſhalt be now as the wings of a Dove, that is covered with Silver, and whoſe feathers are like yellow Gold. Though thou be like the Kedarims, which dwell in Tents, the black-Moores; that is, by reaſon of thy ſinne, ſubject to the condemnation of God, and deprived of his glory: yet ſhalt thou be in Chriſt, goodly and glorious, as thoſe that dwell in exceeding glory, under *the Curtaines of Salomon.* Though thou be black with the remnants of originall corruption, and preſent infirmities; though the Sunne have looked upon thee, and parched thee with the ſcorching heat of ſore affliction, and chaſtiſements: yet ſhalt thou now ſhine like the Sunne in his ſtrength, with the royall Robe of Chriſts righteouſneſſe, with freſh comfort, and laſting chearefulneſſe.

Cant. 1. 5.

Thou ſhalt be ſtable, and ſhalt not feare.] Though the wicked tremble many times at their owne ſhadowes, and the ſound of a Leaſe ſhaken doth chaſe them, and ſtrike a faintneſſe into their hearts, and a trembling into their loynes; yet thou ſhalt never be afraid of any evill tidings, whether they be forged by the ſpightfull and impoyſoned tongues of prophane men, to defame and diſgrace thee, or fetched out of the bottome

Pſal. 112. Prov. 3. 24.

of

of Hell, by Sathans malice, to terrifie thee; though the meſſengers of miſeries and miſchiefes come thicke and three-fold upon thee, as they did upon *Iob*; though the Earth be moved, and the mountaines fall into the midſt of the Sea; nay, though the whole World be on flames about thine eares, and the Heavens be rouled together like a Scrowle: yet ſhalt thou be ſtable, and ſhalt not feare, becauſe thy heart is fixed, and beleeveth in the Lord. *Iob* 5. 21, 22. *Pſal.* 46. 2.

Thou ſhalt forget thy miſerie, and remember it as waters that are paſt.] Thy happineſſe and comfort ſhall be ſo entire and unmixed, ſo abſolute and overflowing, that the very remembrance of former miſeries and terrors ſhall be drowned and devoured in the exceſſe and excellencie of that; even as the travels of a woman, in her joyes for a new-borne ſonne: Or, if it be, that thy former diſcomforts ſometimes ſteale into thy minde, they ſhall not be able to reſt or remaine there, by reaſon of the predominancie of ſpirituall pleaſures; but glide away as ſwiftly, as the head-long ſtreame of the moſt haſtie Torrent. *Verſ.* 16.

Thine age alſo ſhall appeare more cleare than the Noone-day: thou ſhalt ſhine, and be as the Morning.] The Morning is the very Crowne of Time, and the beautie of the Day; the Poets call it, the * Roſie-finger'd Morning. When they labour to deſcribe corporall Beautie to the life, and ſet it out in the beſt perfection and freſheſt colours that the utmoſt power and higheſt ſtraine of wit and art can poſſibly deviſe; they take their Meta- *Verſ.* 17. * ῥοδοδάκτυλος ἠώς.

phors and amplifications from the ruddineſſe and brightneſſe of the Morning: And yet thou ſhalt be as faire as the Morning, with all Divine Graces, ſpirituall brightneſſe, and beautie of thy Soule; nay, a Soule ſet thicke with ſpirituall Graces, is farre more faire than the Firmament, with all thoſe Eyes of Gold, and faireſt Lampes, that ſhine from it. Neither ſhalt thou be onely as the Morning, but as the Morning Sunne; thou ſhalt riſe higher and higher in degrees of holineſſe, and ſtrength of Grace, untill thou commeſt to the higheſt point of perfection in this Heaven upon Earth, the Kingdome of Grace. And after thou haſt finiſhed thy courſe, and left behind thee the comfortable heat of thy gracious zeale, much Light from thy good example, and the ſweet influence of thy holy life; upon thy death-bed, thou ſhalt ſett with the ſweeteſt and brighteſt beames of all heavenly comfort, into the immeaſurable Ocean of endleſſe joyes.

Verſ. 20. *Thou ſhalt be bold, becauſe there is hope; and thou ſhalt digge Pits, and ſhalt lye downe ſafely.*] Thou ſhalt be aſſured of Heaven, and a Crowne of Glory hereafter, that thou ſhalt walke through this Valley of Miſerie like a Lyon; nor Devill, nor man, nor beaſt, nor any creature, ſhall affright or amaze thee. Caſt thine eyes, ſupernaturally enabled, and enlarged with the Light of Faith, from Eaſt to Weſt, into the bottome of Hell, and glory of Heaven; and thou ſhalt clearely ſee, that all is thine, by the purchaſe, right, and conqueſt of the Sonne of God: *The ſtones in the ſtreet ſhall*

Job 5. 23. *be*

be at league with thee, the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee: The creatures ſhall be all ſworne to thy ſafetie; the pureſt ſpirits, the miniſters of God, ſhall be thy Guardians; Saints and Angels are alreadie in thy ſight; Immortalitie hath lengthened thy dayes, and the glory of God is before thee in a Glaſſe.

When thou doeſt take thy reſt, none ſhall make thee afraid; yea, many ſhall make ſuit unto thee.] When the darkeneſſe of the Night encompaſſeth thee, thou ſhalt not be affrighted with terrors and apparitions; when blackneſſe and ſilence, the habitation of feares and aſtoniſhment, ſhall pitch round about thee, thou ſhalt be lightſome with inward comfort; when all thy Sences, the ſcouts and watch-men for diſcovering dangers, and preſerving thy ſafetie, ſhall be locked up; his providence, that neither ſlumbers nor ſleepes, ſhall tenderly and carefully watch over thee; *Whether thou die or live, whether thou ſleepe or wake, thou art the Lords:* And therefore, when thou ſleepeſt, thou ſhalt not be afraid; and when thou ſleepeſt, thy ſleepe ſhall be ſweet: *Thou ſhalt not feare for any ſudden feare, neither for the deſtruction of the wicked, when it commeth; for the Lord ſhall be for thy aſſurance, and ſhall keepe thy foot from being caught.*

Yea, many ſhall make ſuit unto thee.] Thou ſhalt be ſo encompaſſed with the bleſſings of God, ſo protected from above, ſo high in Gods favour, that many will come for ſhadow and ſhelter unto thee; they will looke for reliefe and comfort under the ſhadow of thy wings, thy power and

Verſ. 19.

Rom. 14. 8.

Prov. 3. 25.

See Iob 5. 21, 22.

authoritie ſhall be a refuge and repoſe for oppreſſed and diſgraced innocencie.

All theſe bleſſings, and a thouſand moe, are built upon a through preparation of the heart, as upon the firſt foundation ſtone: Preparation is the very firſt ſtep to all theſe degrees, and height of happineſſe.

But on the contrarie part, if a man neglect preparing his heart, praying unto God, forſaking his ſinnes, reforming his family; let him looke for nothing but Curſes and Plagues.

Verſ. 20. *But the eyes of the wicked* (ſaith *Iob*) *ſhall faile, and their refuge ſhall periſh, and their hope ſhall be ſorrow of minde.*] They thinke, their formall and cuſtomarie ſervice of God will ſerve the turne; and thereupon, with great greedineſſe and confidence, expect and looke for the ſalvation of their ſoules after this life: but they ſhall waile, and gaze, untill their eyes ſinke into their holes, and yet ſhall never be able to taſte of true comfort: They may crie untill their tongues cleave to the roofe of their mouth, with the fooliſh Virgins; Math. 25. *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, *Math.* 25. but the Gate of everlaſting happineſſe ſhall for ever be ſhut againſt them: They may ſtruggle and *ſtrive*, by the ſtrength of their good meanings, and formall Chriſtianitie, Luke 13. 24. *to enter in at the ſtrait Gate, but ſhall never be able.*

Their refuge ſhall periſh.] They have ſtayed themſelves upon broken ſtaves of Reed, and now they will runne into their hands and hearts too, unto their vexation and horror.

And

And their hope ſhall be ſorrow of minde.] Their end ſhall be deſpaire, and horrible confuſion.

I have ſtayed long upon the motives and inducements to preparation, before we come to the hearing of the Word, or undergoe any ſacred buſineſſe; and upon the neceſſitie, bleſſings, and benefits of ſo holy a dutie. The reaſon is, I would gladly ſtirre you up, and my ſelfe too, to a through and conſtant practiſe and performance of it: and, becauſe the neglect and omiſſion of it, is the cauſe that the Miniſterie of the Word is not onely fruitleſſe, and in vaine, unto thouſands; but (which is a fearefull thing) the ſavour of death unto death unto them.

I come now to the ſpeciall points conſiderable in preparation, before wee preſent our ſelves in this place to the hearing of the Word.

What preparation is.

This preparation is an holy action, or exerciſe, which by examination of our Conſciences, purgation of our hearts, prayer unto God, and private reading the Scriptures, maketh our ſoules fit Veſſels to receive and entertaine the ſpirituall Treaſures of Grace, and food of eternall Life, offered and tendered unto us by the Miniſterie of the Word; that ſo they may be the more effectually and fruitfully wrought upon, and happily ſubdued to the power and practice thereof.

Foure things required in preparation.

In this preparation, I conſider and require eſpecially theſe foure things: firſt, Examination of the Conſcience; ſecondly, Purgation of the heart; thirdly, Prayer unto God; fourthly, Readineſſe of heart, to receive every truth.

1 Examination.

First, for Examination of the Conſcience.

Examination is a dutie practiſable by all true Chriſtians, at many times, and upon ſundry occaſions.

1 Extraordinarie.

It is either more extraordinarie; and that is, either in the time of ſolemne Faſt, and generall humiliation, for ſome publike Plague and calamitie that lyes upon the State or Church. Wee are then ſeriouſly to ſearch and ranſacke throughly our Conſciences, that wee may throw that or thoſe ſinnes out of our affections, practiſe, and allowance, which have their part in pulling downe thoſe publike Plagues upon us.

In time of publike calamitie.

2 When our families are viſited with ſome ſpeciall judgement.

Or, ſecondly, when our family is ſingled out, and viſited with ſome ſpeciall and extraordinarie ſcourge, and judgement: and then muſt we make an impartiall inquiſition into our hearts; leſt we be the *Achans*, which by our ſecret ſinnes provoke Gods cauſefull wrath.

3 When wee our ſelves are afflicted in particular.

Or, when our ſelves in a more private and particular manner, are afflicted with ſome ſpeciall vexation; as, by ſome maladie and miſerie in our bodies, with ſome terrors and feares in our minds, or with ſome ſlanders, diſgraces, and imputations upon our good names: when Gods hand is upon us any of theſe wayes, wee are preſently to conceive, that the ſinnes of our ſoules are the true cauſes of all the miſeries and croſſes which befall us any manner of wayes; and therefore wee are narrowly and exactly to enquire into our ſelves, and to caſt out our ſecret beloved ſinnes, thoſe lurking rebels, the breeders of all our woe.

Beſides,

Beſides, examination of our hearts in theſe or the like caſes; there is alſo a more ordinarie and uſuall examination neceſſarie, and required of us, and that eſpecially every day; that we may make the Score of our ſinnes leſſe, and our account ſhorter, againſt the Day of our Viſitation; that wee may more entirely and comfortably preſerve and enjoy Gods favour and protection, inward peace of Conſcience, ſpirituall joy, and Chriſtian chearfulneſſe in all our affaires and paſſages.

2 Ordinarie.

1 Every day.

2 Before wee come to receive, and be partakers of the holy Sacrament of the ſacred body and bloud of Chriſt; leſt by neglect and omiſſion of this dutie, we become unworthy receivers, and ſo eate and drinke our owne judgement, and damnation; nay, be guiltie of the innocent and precious bloud of Chriſt Ieſus; which one day will be an heavie and unſupportable burthen to our Conſciences. To be guiltie of the ſinfull bloud of prophane men, is able to make the proudeſt heart and higheſt ſtomacke to tremble and quake like an Aſpen leafe, and to ſtrike through his ſoule; with reſtleſſe horrour, and gaſtly ſights. Who is able then to beare the guilt of guiltleſſe bloud? *Abels* innocent bloud cryed for and pulled downe ſtrange and deſperate vengeance upon cruell *Cain*. How loud then will be the crie of the bloud of the innocent Lambe of God? How will it ring in the eares of God the Father? How fearefully will it fill Heaven and Earth, untill it hath brought downe Plagues and Curſes upon thoſe wofull Soules, who irreverently and un-

2 Before the Sacrament.

Simile.

Gen. 4. 13.

unpreparedly prophane ſo high and holy a myſterie?

3 Before wee heare the Word preached.

A third ordinarie examination, is before wee preſſe into the Houſe of God, and preſent our ſelves before his Miniſters and Meſſengers, to be inſtructed in his will from Heaven, out of his holy Word; leſt this bleſſed Ordinance ſhould be accurſed unto us. You may ſee in the Prophet *Ezech.* 14. 7,8. how the Lord threatens that perſon that comes to his Miniſters to enquire of them, or to be informed by them, and yet ſeparates himſelfe from the Lord, and ſets up any Idoll in his heart, and ſtumbling-blocke of his iniquitie, before his face; that the Lord will ſet his face againſt him, and make him a ſigne and a Proverbe, and cut him off from the midſt of his people. Whence wee may well inferre, that it will be very dangerous for any to come to the hearing of the Word, without examination of his heart, whether there be any ſuch ſtumbling-blocke of iniquitie in it, or no.

The ſecond dutie beſides hearing, is purging of our hearts.

2 Becauſe that examination of the heart, to finde out our corruptions, tends eſpecially to the cleanſing of it; therefore the ſecond dutie before the hearing of the Word, is the purgation or cleanſing of the heart, firſt, from ſinne; which the Scripture beats much upon, *Iam.* 1. 21. *Lay apart all filthineſſe and ſuperfluitie of naughtineſſe, and receive with meekeneſſe the ingrafted word, &c.* It is not meerely lay apart, but put away quite and cleane all filthineſſe: and this is a fit preparative for the hearing of the Word, as appeares alſo by that paralell

ralell place, 1 *Pet.*2. 1,2. *Wherefore putting away all malice, all guile and hypocriſie, and envie, and evill ſpeakings, as new-borne babes deſire the ſincere Milke of the word.* And there is the ſame reaſon for any other ſinne to be put away, that there is for theſe mentioned. As it is with the body, when the ſtomack is foule, and clogged with bad humours, wee ſhould firſt purge it, before wee feede it; for otherwiſe, whatſoever we eate, doth but nouriſh and encreaſe the corrupt humours of the body: So it is with the ſoule, when it is ſtuffed or clogged with ſinne; whatſoever is heard in the Miniſtery of the Word, ſhall be perverted and abuſed by it, and wreſted to the deſtruction of it.

It is no wonder therefore, that thoſe that live in diſſolute or ſcandalous courſes, thoſe that are drunk on the evening before the Lords day, or ſpend it in gaming, or company keeping, or have bin acting of ſome ſoule ſinne, and then repaire unto the Word; it is no wonder, I ſay, that ſuch goe away never a whit the better, but rather worſe than they came. Did you ever know any Salve ſo ſoveraigne, that would cure a wound that had a ſplint or an arrow-head remaining in it? Surely, every knowne ſinne unrepented of, hinders the ſaving operation of the Word in any mans heart; yea, it will make the Word the ſavour of death unto a man. See to this purpoſe, *Ier.*7. 9,10.

Secondly, the heart muſt alſo be purged from all worldly cares and thoughts, which may divide or draw away the heart: *Math.*13. 22. The cares of the World doe choake the Seed of the Word:

Luke

Luke 21.34. The cares of this life doe ſurfet the heart. Now, as it is with a man in a ſurfet, hee is not fit to eat, neither can he digeſt any wholeſome food: ſo, when as the heart is ſurfetted with worldly cares, it is unfit for any ſpirituall food. You know how it was with *Martha*, *Luke* 10.41. Ieſus ſaid unto *Martha*; *Thou art troubled about many things, but one thing is neceſſarie: Martha* had a clutter of many worldly matters, that made a great noiſe in her head, and hindered better matters, that ſhe cared not for hearing.

How then ſhall they profit by the Word, that doe jumpe out of their worldly buſineſſe, and from buſying their heads about their callings, into the Houſe of God, to heare and to performe the Exerciſes of Religion? Truly, though they be never ſo diligent in hearing, yet their hearts will goe after their covetouſneſſe, *Ezech.* 33.31.

Thirdly, Prayer, another dutie.

3 A third dutie before the hearing of the Word, is Prayer; no good thing can be expected from God, as a bleſſing, if it be not ſought by prayer, *Deut.* 4.7. and wee finde it layd downe as a condition required, *Prov.* 2.1,2,3, &c. *My ſonne, if thou wilt receive my words, and encline thine eare to wiſedome, and apply thy heart to underſtanding; yea, if thou cryeſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding, then ſhalt thou underſtand the feare of the Lord, and finde out the knowledge of God.* The reaſon is, *Verſ.* 6. *For the Lord giveth wiſedome, and out of his mouth commeth knowledge and underſtanding.* Becauſe the Lord gives knowledge, therefore you muſt crie for it unto him. What

is

is the reason that you do pray for your *daily Bread*, and a blessing upon it? Why, *Deut.8.3. Man lives not by Bread onely, &c?* If this be so, much more ought you to pray for a blessing upon your spirituall food.

Now for the particulars: First, you ought to pray for the Teachers, That they may so speake, as they ought to speake, *Col.4.3,4.* so they are to pray for the power and peace of the Ministerie, *2 Thess.3.1,2.* Secondly, you must pray for your selves, that through Gods assistance you may heare profitably, and be blessed in the hearing: *Ioh.3.27.* No man can receive any thing, except that it be given him from above. Therefore *David* prayed, *Psal.119.18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderfull things contained in thy word. Isay 48.17.* God sayth, *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit:* Therefore no profiting by the Word, without seeking unto the Lord for it.

Now the prophaneness of people in this case, is the generall cause that our Ministerie doth no more good: Few pray at all before they come to Church, either for the Minister, or for themselves; nay, few, even when they are in the Church, have any heart to joyne with the Preacher in the prayer that he makes before the Sermon: But the complaint of the Prophet may be taken up in this case, *Isa.64.7. There is none that calleth on thy Name, that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee.*

4 You must be sure to goe with an open heart, readie to receive every truth that God shall teach you

The fourth dutie, openesse of heart.

you in this Ordinance. *Act.* 17. 11. it is ſaid of thoſe noble Beræans, that they received the Word with all readineſſe of minde, *i.* readineſſe to receive every truth. And *Cornelius* ſaid, *Act.* 10. 33. *Wee are all here preſent before God, to heare all things that are commanded thee of God.* It is well added (*that are commanded thee of God:*) not what any Miniſter ſhall teach, be he never ſo good, or ſo learned; nay, were he an Angell from Heaven, yet his Doctrine muſt be examined, *Gal.* 1. 8. But when there is ſuch a diſpoſition in us, as to receive both in judgement and practiſe whatſoever God ſhall reveale unto us out of his Word; this is a precious diſpoſition.

But, alas, the moſt come to heare with prejudicate and fore-ſtalled hearts, they beare a ſecret grudge, and quarrell, againſt ſome ſtrict Truth, or other; as, againſt the ſanctification of the Lords Day, or Family-duties, or ſecret communion with the Lord, by prayer dayly, &c. And theſe imaginations ſeeme as ſtrong Holds, to keepe Chriſt and his Truth out of their hearts, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And thus men, that in their hearing doe limit the Spirit of God, would (if it lay in their power) *ſay* as thoſe wicked men, *Iſay* 30. 10. *to the Seers, ſee not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not right things unto us; ſpeake unto us ſmooth things:* And thoſe that ſaid ſo, the Lord calls them deſpiſers of his Word.

Theſe are the maine and principall duties before the hearing of the Word.

Secondly,

Secondly, let me proceed briefely to thoſe duties that are required in the hearing of the Word: Which wee muſt the rather ſtirre up our ſelves unto, becauſe wee have naturally uncircumciſed hearts, *Ier.* 6. 10. and are dull of hearing, *Heb.* 5. 11.

2 Duties required in the hearing of the Word.

Now the principall duties in hearing, are five; which I will briefely ſet downe as may be.

1 You muſt ſet your ſelves in Gods preſence, whileſt you are hearing of his Word: and conſider with your ſelves, that it is God that you have to deale withall in this buſineſſe, and not man; and that it is Gods Word, and not mans. It is the great commendation of the Theſſalonians, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 13. that they received the Word as the Word of God. This was that whereby the Lord would prepare his people to receive the Law, *Exod.* 20. *God ſpake all theſe words.* And hee not onely gave the Law, but the whole ſumme of the Goſpel with his owne voice, *Mat.* 3. 17. *Loe a voice from Heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Sonne, in whom I am well pleaſed.* Yea, it is the Lord himſelfe that ſpeakes unto you in our Miniſtery, *Luke* 10. 16. So the Lord is preſent in a ſpeciall manner, where his Word is preached, to obſerve and marke how it is received, or delivered; and either to bleſſe or curſe the hearers, or ſpeakers, accordingly. So that of this and ſuch like places, it may be ſaid as *Iacob* ſaid of Bethel, *Gen.* 28. 16, 17. *Surely, the Lord is in this place:* and, *How dreadfull is this place? This is no other than the Houſe of God, this is the Gate of Heaven.*

1 To ſet our ſelves in Gods preſence.

And

And truly, this apprehenſion of Gods preſence in the Aſſemblies of his people, will worke three things in us.

Firſt, keepe us in that awfull and reverent diſpoſition of body and minde that is meet.

Secondly, it will preſerve our hearts from roving and wandering thoughts, which are great impediments of hearing; *Pſal.*119.113. *I hate vaine thoughts, but thy Law doe I love.*

Thirdly, it will make us to receive and obey that that ſhall be taught us; for ſo God hath beene wont to prepare his people, to receive his Word: yea, he ſaid of his people, when they were thus affected, *Deut.*15.29. *Oh that there were ſuch an heart in them, to feare me and keepe my Commandements alwayes.*

Now the want of this, is that which hinders abundance of benefit that the Miniſterie of the Word would otherwiſe doe us: This is the root of all the miſchiefe the Devill doth to poore ſoules, in the hearing of the Word; the practice thereof, is the fountaine of all our good. Many graceleſſe wretches there are in our Aſſemblies, like him, *Luke* 18.2. that neither feared God, nor regarded man; that deſpiſe the Church of God, yea, contemne the preſence of the holy Angels, (1 *Cor.*11.10.) and of God himſelfe in the Aſſemblies, who hath layd ſuch a ſpeciall charge upon us, *Lev.*26.2. to keepe his *Sabbaths*, and to reverence his *Sanctuarie*; and he addes this reaſon, *I am Iehovah.*

2 Attention.

2 The ſecond dutie in hearing, is diligent attention

attention to that we heare: as it is ſaid of our Saviour Chriſt, *Luke* 19. 48. *The people were very attentive to heare him*; or, as it is in the Originall, they *hanged on him*: as if their eares and mindes had beene tyed to his tongue; there was ſuch a dependencie upon him. And that is a remarkable place, *Ezech.* 40. 4. *Sonne of man, behold with thine eyes, and heare with thine eares, and ſet thine heart upon all that I ſhall ſhew thee.* See what attention is required: Hee bids him ſet his eyes and his eares, and his heart and all, upon that hee ſpeakes; and not upon ſome things onely, but upon all that hee ſhould declare unto him. So *Prov.* 4. 20, 21, 22. *My ſonne attend unto my words, incline thine eare unto my ſayings; keepe them in the midſt of thine heart, for they are life to thoſe that finde them*: i. looke as a condemned man will hearken to the Sentence of the Prince; every word hee ſpeakes, being life or death: As the ſervants of *Benhadad*, when they were in their enemies power, 1 *King.* 20. 33. they obſerved diligently whether any word of comfort would come from him, and they did haſtily catch it. Thus, with ſuch diligence and attention, ſuch poore condemned creatures (as wee are) are to heare the Word of God.

Now to quicken attention, theſe meanes are profitable.

Firſt, it is good to doe as they did, *Luke* 4. 20. They faſtened their eyes upon Chriſt; ſo doe ye upon the Miniſter, and ſuffer them not to wander up and downe: A wandering eye

eye is alwayes a ſure evidence of a wandering heart.

Secondly, if ye doe not thus, it will be a good helpe for thoſe that can write, to note the Word, as *Baruch* wrote from the mouth of *Ieremiah*, *Ier.* 36. 4. This holds the minde cloſe to all that is ſaid. Some object indeed, that it hinders affection in hearing: but though it may doe ſo in ſome, for the preſent; yet afterwards it will worke more laſting affections upon the Word. Onely they that uſe this helpe-meanes, muſt be carefull that they doe not preſume upon their Notes ſo, as to neglect the recalling of what they have heard, (as many uſe to doe) and ſo loſe all holy affections, and that impreſſion that the Word would make upon their hearts.

A Caveat.

Thirdly, entreat the Lord to open thy heart, as he opened *Lydia's* heart, *Act.* 16. 14. Our hearts are ſhut up quite, and cannot attend unto any thing that is good, except that the Lord opens them.

Obſerve then another cauſe, why the Word is ſo unfruitfull unto many. Some are like the *deafe Adders*, that ſtop their eares againſt the voice of the *Charmer*, *Pſal.* 58. 4, 5. And ſome ſleepers there are, that faile in their attention, that the Devill uſually rocks aſleepe, when they come to heare; but they that are ſuch, ſhould know, that their damnation ſleepes not, the Devill ſleepes not: he comes to the Aſſemblies, to picke up the good Seed that is ſowne; nay, he comes to picke up their ſoules indeed: for he cares not ſo much for

for the Seed, but he will take your ſelves napping and your ſoules eſpecially, and carry them to Hell. Beſides, let them remember what befell *Eutychus*, *Act.*20. 9,10. he ſlept at a long Sermon, that laſted till midnight; but he was taken up dead, falling from the third Loft to the ground: What ſhall become of ſuch then, that ſleepe in the day time, at a Sermon of an houre long? And let them alſo take heed of that *ſpirit of ſlumber*, that the Lord hath threatned to poure upon the deſpiſers of the Word, *Iſay* 29. 9,10. The like might be ſaid of our gazers and gapers about, and thoſe that by their talking diſturbe others, and hinder themſelves: they ſhut their eares, and turne them away from God; and may juſtly expect, that he ſhall turne away his eares from them: as it is threatened, *Prov.*2.8,9. *Zach.*7. 13.

3 You muſt heare the Word with underſtanding and judgement; *i.* labour to underſtand what wee heare: And to this end, the Miniſter muſt have a ſpeciall care to teach plainely, ſo as he may be underſtood, *Neh.* 8. 8. And Chriſt calls upon his hearers for this, *Math.* 15. 10. *Heare, and underſtand:* How ſhould we elſe profit by that we heare? *Act.* 8. 36. *Vnderſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt* (ſaith *Philip* to the Eunuch:) ſo ſay thou to thine owne heart; Vnderſtandeſt thou what thou heareſt?

3 Heare with underſtanding.

Now the meanes to underſtand the Word, are theſe.

Firſt, come to the Word, with a willing minde to learne: you know the Eunuch, *Act.* 8. though

he understood not what he read, yet because he had a minde to learne, how the Lord provided for him, and what a comfortable successe *Philips* Sermon had with him: Men love to teach willing schollers; so doth God, when we come with willing and readie mindes to be taught.

Secondly, exercise your selves in the truth of God, *Heb.* 5. last; you must by continuall use, get your sences exercised to discerne both good and evill: but especially, be well acquainted with the principles and grounds of Catechisme; it is the want of this, that makes men that they understand not what is preached: They that are not first well nourished with Milke, will not be fit to receive and digest stronger meat: if the foundation be not well layd, it is in vaine to build.

Thirdly, walke according to Light; *Psal.* 111. 10. *A good understanding have all they, that doe his Commandements*: Then, if thou wouldest get a good understanding, and know the mysterie of godlinesse, walke according to knowledge, imploy that little knowledge thou hast well, and then there is a promise to give thee more.

Fourthly, be diligent in instructing and teaching thy family: If thou art set over others, a little knowledge will encrease greatly, by this meanes. *Gen.* 18. 17, 19. the Lord said; *Shall I hide any thing from Abraham? No*: And hee gives this reason; *I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keepe the way of the Lord.* If you teach your families, God will teach you.

Well;

Well; there are a ſort of doltiſh hearers, that will heare, and ſeeme to be very attentive, from yeeres end to yeeres end, and be never a whit the wiſer, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7. The heavie judgement of God is upon many of them, that is mentioned, *Math.* 13. 14. And in them is fulfilled the Propheſie of *Iſay*; *By hearing ye ſhall heare, and ſhall not underſtand*; and that, *Iſay* 27. 11. *It is a people of no underſtanding: therefore he that made them, ſhall not ſave them; and he that formed them, ſhall ſhew them no favour.*

4 Heare with affection.

4 You muſt heare the Word with affection, and delight. It is ſaid of Gods people in the Primitive Church, that they heard the Word gladly, and of Chriſts hearers, *Mark.* 12. 37. *they heard him gladly:* And it is noted for a great ſigne of grace, to heare the Word gladly, *Pſal.* 119. 162. *I rejoyce at thy Word, as one that findeth great ſpoyles. David* had beene a ſouldier; and ye know, that they that have lyen at the ſiege of a Citie a long time, and at the laſt take it, will rejoyce exceedingly in the ſpoyle of it: therefore he rejoyces in the Word, as they that doe divide the ſpoyles. And truly, whereas common people complaine of the badneſſe of their memories; this would be a marvellous helpe to their memories, if they would heare with delight: therefore *David* ſayth, *Pſal.* 119. 16. *I will delight my ſelfe in thy Statutes, I will not forget thy Word.* This delight he meanes will ſtrengthen our memories.

Now contrarie to this, are a great number,

that heare without all delight, and account it a great wearineſſe, *Mal.* 1. 13. and thoſe the dulleſt houres, that they ſpend in hearing. Well, the Lord hath threatned, that the Word ſhall never doe us good, unleſſe that wee attend to it with love and delight, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11. *Becauſe they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved; therefore God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, to beleeve Lyes.* A fearefull threatning, much to be conſidered in theſe dayes: For this is the reaſon, that Popiſh trumperies and helliſh deluſions have ſuch entertainment, becauſe God in his juſt judgement, gives up thoſe to ſuch ſtrong deluſions, that love not the ſtrict Truth of the Word of God.

5 Heare with application.

5 You muſt heare the Word, with application of it to your owne hearts, and lives; apply every truth to your ſelves, for your owne uſe and comfort, and terror and inſtruction: as it is *Iob* 5. laſt; *Heare this, and know it for thy ſelfe*; carry this truth home to thine owne heart: And,

Firſt, there is no truth of God taught out of his Word, but it concernes every one of Gods people, and was intended for our uſe; *Rom.* 15. 4. *Whatſoever is written, is written for our learning.*

Secondly, there is no truth can be taught, to doe us good, unleſſe that wee apply it: as no Plaiſter can doe the Patient good, unleſſe it be applyed; no meat is able to doe us any good, be it dreſſed never ſo curiouſly, unleſſe it be eaten and digeſted. This compariſon is applyed by the

Prophet

Prophet to this purpoſe, *Iſa.* 55. 2. *Hearken diligently unto me, and eate ye that which is good:* unleſſe we eate it, it will doe us no good.

Thirdly, the faithfull have been wont to apply all to themſelves; as every member of the body drawes nouriſhment from the ſtomacke, to make it his owne: to which the Apoſtle alludes, *Eph.* 4. 16. So the Diſciples of our Saviour did, *Math.* 26. 21, 22. When our Saviour had ſaid, that one of them ſhould betray him, they were exceeding ſorrowfull, and began every one of them to ſay unto him; *Lord, is it I?*

And ſurely, the want of this application, is one great cauſe that the Word profits not, becauſe they beleeve it not, nor apply the Word unto themſelves: *Heb.* 4. 2. *The word preached did not profit them, becauſe it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

Now one principall worke of faith, is to apply thoſe things that are delivered in the Word: But this, the moſt hearers doe exceedingly faile in; either not applying, or miſ-applying of the truth; ſhifting off all upon others, and taking little or nothing to themſelves. As wee have a notable example of this, *Rom.* 1. *ult.* compared with *Rom.* 2. 1. In the former place, the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſome, that knowing the judgement of God, That thoſe that doe ſuch things, are worthy of death; yet not onely doe ſuch things, but take pleaſure in thoſe that doe them: yet in the beginning of the next Chapter, you find the ſame men judging and condemning of others; yet thinking and

perſwading themſelves, that they (being guiltie of the ſame ſinnes) ſhall eſcape the judgement of God. Why? but becauſe they apply not to themſelves, but miſ-apply to others the things they heare.

Many ſuch hearers there are in theſe dayes, which are very cunning in ſhifting off the threatnings of God againſt their owne Drunkenneſſe, and Whoredome, and Swearing, &c. yet very apt to pinne the ſame Word upon others. Well, theſe are not wiſe for themſelves, and all their hearing ſhall doe them no good. Thus much of the duties required in hearing.

3 The duties after hearing.

Now follow thoſe duties that are required after hearing. And theſe are chiefely thus.

1 We muſt remember it.

1 Wee muſt be very carefull to remember and keepe that which wee have heard, *Prov.* 4. 4. *My ſonne, let thine heart retaine my words:* and, *Verſ.* 21. *Keepe them in the midſt of thine heart.* As a man that hath a Iewell, will be carefull to locke it up in the ſafeſt Cheſt hee hath, leſt it ſhould be ſtolne away: Which is the very compariſon of the Wiſe-man, *Prov.* 6. 20, 21. So *Mary*, *Luke* 2. 51. *kept all the ſayings in her heart:* and *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 11. hid the Commandements in his heart; and hee gives the reaſon, That hee *might not ſinne againſt the Lord.* And the truth is, that as meat that is eaten, if it remaines not in the ſtomacke, it will never doe us good: ſo the beſt ſpirituall food that can be, except it be retained by us, will not profit us: *Luke* 8. 15. *The good Ground are they, which with*

with an honeſt and good heart having heard the word, keepe it, &c.

Many there are, that are very careleſſe of this dutie: They thinke they have diſcharged themſelves abundantly, if they heare the whole Sermon attentively; as though there were nothing more required at their hands: Like our Saviours hearers, *Math.22.22. When they heard him, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way:* but wee never heare more of them. So many heare deſirouſly, and with open and greedie eares: but, as wee ſay, it goes in at one eare, and out at another; it ſtayes not for any after-uſe, but a little preſent admiration. Others heare, and the Word ſmites them a little on their Conſciences, and wounds; and one would thinke, ſome good thing would be wrought upon them: but they goe away, and the motion dyes. They are as men that are Seaſicke, whileſt the Word humbles them, and makes their Conſciences to wamble within them; but they are as whole as a Fiſh, when as they are once landed at the Church doore: Or like unto Mettals, which are ſoft and plyable, whileſt they are in the fire; ſo theſe are in the hearing: but ſhortly they looſe all the efficacie of the Word, and become harder than before.

Well, let us in the feare of God, hearken diligently to the words of the Holy-Ghoſt, *Heb.2.1.* That *wee ought to give the more earneſt heed to the things that wee have heard, leſt at any time wee ſhould let them ſlip*, or runne out (like riven Veſſels:)

Why; what is the danger? *How ſhall wee eſcape, if wee neglect ſo great Salvation?*

2 The ſecond dutie, Meditation.

2 Wee muſt meditate and ſeriouſly thinke of that that wee have heard; that is more than remembring. There is a great deale of difference betwixt the poſſeſſing of goods, and the uſing and imploying of them for our benefit; betwixt the laying up of garments in our Wardrobes, and the wearing of them upon our backes, to keepe us warme: this latter is done by meditation. *Prov.* 6. 22, 23. *My ſonne, binde the Commandements continually upon thy heart, and tie them about thy necke:* It is a phraſe of ſpeech borrowed from garments that are bound about the body; for meditation bindes the Word cloſe to the heart. It is ſaid of *Mary, Luke* 2. 19. that *ſhee pondered* the words of the Angel *in her heart:* and *David* was frequent in this dutie, *Pſal.* 119. 15. *I will meditate in thy Precepts* (ſaith he:) And it was *Pauls* advice to *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *Meditate upon theſe things, give thy ſelfe wholly to them, that thy profiting may appeare to all.*

Firſt, this is the way to make men profit by the Word of God; and that ſo evidently, that all may take notice of it, this is one great benefit of the Word meditated upon, *Ioſh.* 1. 8. *Thou ſhalt meditate in the Booke of the Law day and night:* To what end? *That thou mayeſt obſerve to doe according to all that is written therein.*

Secondly, this courſe will argue unfained love unto the Word, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Oh how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, this will greatly encreaſe our comfort in the Word, and cauſe us to feele much more ſweetneſſe in it; even as the chewing of our meat makes us to taſte much more ſweetneſſe in it. *Pſal.* 119. 15, 16. he ſaith; *I will meditate on thy Precepts, and have reſpect unto thy wayes, I will delight my ſelfe in thy Statutes:* Meditation ever brings with it delight.

Fourthly, this will greatly encreaſe our knowledge: *Pſal.* 119. 99. *I have more underſtanding than my teachers:* Why? becauſe *thy teſtimonies are my meditation.*

Now, if this be required after hearing; how is it poſſible that they ſhould profit by the Word, that never ſcarcely thinke of it afterwards? It is noted of the Diſciples, that though they had ſeene Chriſts mightie power in the miracle of the *Loaves*; yet becauſe they conſidered not the miracle, their hearts were hardened: *i.* becauſe they did not meditate upon it, they were never the better for it. And thus it uſually ſpeedes with thoſe that are careleſſe in the performing of this dutie.

3 The third duty after hearing, Conference and Repetition.

3 Wee muſt conferre of that wee have heard, and repeat it amongſt our ſelves, and examine the Scriptures about the truth of that that is delivered. I joyne them all together; for ſo they may well be, in the practice of them. For conference, *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 172. *My tongue ſhall ſpeake of thy Word, for all thy Commandements are righteouſneſſe.* This was ordinarily practiſed by the Diſciples of our Saviour Chriſt, when he had taught how

how hardly rich men ſhall be ſaved, *Mark.*10.26. *They were aſtoniſhed out of meaſure, and ſaid amongſt themſelves, Who then can be ſaved?* So they conferred about another Sermon of our Saviour, *Ioh.*16.17,18.

Now repetition of Sermons is eſpecially required of them that have families, to repeat the Word unto them: *Deut.* 11.18,19. *You ſhall lay up theſe my words in your hearts, and you ſhall teach them your children; ſpeaking of them when thou ſitteſt in thy houſe:* yea, it is ſaid to be the chiefeſt thing that the Lord had reſpect unto, in giving us his Word, and the knowledge thereof, that we might inſtruct our families in it. *Deut.* 4.10. *Gather ye my people together, and I will make them heare my words, that they may learne to feare me, and may teach their children.* And this, if it were practiſed carefully, would both make children and ſervants more carefull to heare and to attend unto the publike Miniſtery; and better our memories, that wee may be much better able to retaine that which we heare: and it will alſo worke an inward feeling in us and our children, of that which we have heard. Therefore, *Deut.* 6.6,7. it is called the whetting of them upon our children; repetition doth ſet an edge upon their dulneſſe.

Yea further, for the ſearching and examining of the Scriptures, we are commanded, 1 *Theſſ.* 5.21. to *try all things*, and *to hold faſt that which is good.* And the example of thoſe noble Beræans is commended unto us, *Act.* 17.11,12. that ſearched the Scriptures dayly, concerning thoſe things that

that were delivered by *Paul*; *Therefore many of them beleeved.*

Therefore it is a grievous neglect, that people in theſe dayes are guilty of; that neither conferre concerning the Word, they are aſhamed of it, and (which is a fearefull reproach unto them) *the Word of God is a reproach unto them, Ier.6.* 10. nor yet repeat Sermons in their families; they are like *Martha, Luke* 10.41. troubled about ſo many worldly occaſions: nor yet examine and ſearch the Scriptures: And therefore are eaſily carried about with every winde of Doctrine, and never eſtabliſhed and ſetled in the Truth.

4 Wee are to put in practiſe whatſoever wee heare, till that our hearts and lives are quite changed by it: *Iam.* 1.22. *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers onely, deceiving your owne ſoules:* i. they cozen themſelves by falſe reaſonings and arguments, or by ſophiſticall Syllogiſmes, reaſoning after this or the like manner.

4 A fourth duty, Obedience.

παραλογιζομένοι.

He that heares the Word, is a good Chriſtian.
But I heare the Word, &c.

Or thus:

He that heares not, ſhall be damned.
But I heare the Word:
Therefore I ſhall be ſaved.

But how doth this follow? For though the neglect or contempt of the Word is ſufficient to condemne a man, yet the hearing of the Word is not ſufficient to ſaye a man.

Well, obedience is the end of hearing, *Deut.* 5.1. *Heare, O Iſrael, the Statutes which I ſpeake in your*

your eares this day, that ye may learne them, and keepe them, and doe them. The like ye finde, *Iam.*1.25. Yea, obedience to the Word muſt be ſpeedie, without any delayes, or procraſtinations; as it is ſaid of the Coloſſians, *Col.*1.6. that the Goſpel brought forth fruit in them, from the very day they heard it, and knew the grace of God in truth. And the Prophet *David* reſolved, *Pſal.* 119.60. *I made haſt, and prolonged not the time to keepe thy Commandements.* And this is a ſingular frame of heart; becauſe the putting of the Word in practiſe immediately, is a great advantage to the hearer: ſeeing then, the affections of the heart are quicke, and lively; which with delayes dye, and decay very ſuddenly.

Now, alas, for the wonderfull paucitie of ſuch obedient hearers; for very few doe practiſe any thing they heare, leave any ſinne, or doe any dutie: and therefore they muſt needs prove like the *Houſe built on the Sand*; when the time of tryall ſhall come, they muſt needs fall, *Math.*7.27. Againe, there are many that in hearing have good motions and purpoſes; but they are like the ſluggard, that ſaid, *Yet a little ſlumber, yet a little ſleepe*; ſo, becauſe they delay, they vaniſh and come to nothing: of whom, in reſpect of their ſpirituall povertie, it may be ſaid which *Salomon* ſpeakes;

Prov.24.33,34.

His povertie ſhall come as one that travelleth, and *his want as an armed man.*

AN

AN APPENDIX OR ADDITION to this Treatise of the WORD.

PROV. 13. 13.
He that despiseth the word, shall be destroyed.

BY the occasion of which words, let our Christian meditations be a little fastened upon the greatnesse of the sinne of contemning and despising of the Word. My meaning is, not to handle it as a Text, but onely to take a hint, to begin to lay downe the danger of this epidemicall and ordinarie disease, that so exceedingly spreads in these dayes; and then to adde some meanes and directions, to make us to be preparedly and profitably conversant about so great an Ordinance as the hearing of the Word.

WE of this Land (let us now open our eyes to see it) have certainely most fearefully and cursedly sinned against God, and provoked his fierce wrath against us, by contempt

contempt of his holy Word; by ſhutting our eyes againſt the heavenly Light of the Goſpel, which hath beene brought amongſt us; by not prizing the Miniſterie which we have now enjoyed a long time, nor profiting by it: nay, by wicked oppoſing it, with ſecret perſecution at the leaſt, and cruell mockings.

In the firſt place, conſider the crie of this ſinne, and the curſes it brings, from ſuch places as theſe.

1 Firſt, *Iſa.* 29. 11. and both before, and after: *And the viſion of all* (ſaith the Prophet) *is become unto you as the words of a Booke that is ſealed, &c.* So may I juſtly ſay: All the viſions, revelations, diſcoveries of the myſterie of Chriſt, opening of all Gods counſels; all the expoſitions, interpretations, applications of the Miniſtery of moſt places, have beene unto the moſt of us; a fearefull thing I ſpeake, but moſt true, and to be lamented with teares of bloud; *as the words of a Booke that is ſealed, which they deliver to one that can reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee: Then ſhall he ſay, I cannot; for it is ſealed. And the Booke is given to him that cannot reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee: and he ſhall ſay, I cannot reade.* That is, all the Sermons they ſhall heare, and all the heavenly Meſſages are brought them from God, ſhall be as a ſealed Booke to a learned man, or an open Booke unto an Ideot. They ſhall ſtare in the face of the Miniſter, when he is clearely unfolding the great myſterie of godlineſſe, and ſhall not be able to underſtand him; they ſhall have their owne Conſcience unript to the quicke, by

by the power of the Word, and ſhall not perceive it; they ſhall have their ſweet ſinne diſcovered, and damned unto the pit of Hell, by evident and unanſwerable demonſtration out of the Booke of God, and yet have no power to leave it: For *the viſion of the Prophets* (ſaith the Prophet in the forecited Chapter) *is become unto them as the words of a Booke ſealed up.* And therefore, all the Doctrine of ſalvation, though it drop upon them as the raine, and ſtill as the deaw, ſhall be but unto their hearts as unto the hardeſt rockes; all holy admonitions and reproofes, as arrowes ſhot againſt a ſtone-wall; all ſacred Leſſons offered and urged upon their Conſciences, be as a Seale ſtampt upon water, which receives no impreſſion. O moſt wofull and fearefull eſtate!

Secondly, *Iſa.* 28. 9. *Whom ſhall he teach knowledge, &c.* This is not as many underſtand it, That people muſt have a little by little preached unto them, but it is a curſe upon them. As if he ſhould ſay: They are nothing fitter to the diſcipline of the knowledge of God, than infants newly weaned, to receive any inſtruction. *For Precept muſt be upon Precept, &c. Verſ.* 10. As if he ſhould ſay: They muſt be taught as little children, a little at once, and have oft repeated over and over; and yet they can learne nothing to doe them good, chiefely concerning their repentance, and eſcaping Gods Iudgements: I would to God it were not too evident, by long and dolefull experience; That our Miniſterie hath done leſſe good amongſt the elder ſort, and men of much worldly wiſedome, for bringing

bringing them to any ſound and comfortable knowledge in Gods Word, than amongſt little children.

3 Thirdly, *Ezech.*33.30,31,32,33. *And loe, thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleaſant voice, &c.* And is it not ſo with us? That even to ſome that ſeeme to be friends, and to delight in the Miniſterie, the Word is become as if it had loſt all power to turne them from their ſinne, to the holy way; from plauſible formalitie, to ſaving forwardneſſe. Heare a Character of them, *Iſa.*58.2. *Yet they ſeeke me dayly, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteouſneſſe, and forſooke not the Ordinance of their God: they aske of me the Ordinances of Iuſtice, they take delight in approaching to God.* They may heare the Word gladly, as *Herod* did, and perhaps obſerve the Meſſenger, &c. but they will not ſtirre an ynch further from ſinne, and neerer to God: ſay what he will, let him preach out his heart, they will ſtill hugge their boſome-ſinne, and hold exactly their heartleſſe formes and formall faſhions in Religion, after five thouſand Sermons: They are all unto them, as a lovely Song of one that hath a ſweet voice; and leave no more impreſſion upon their Conſciences, than a pleaſant Leſſon upon the Lute, upon the eare, when it is ended.

4 Fourthly, *Ier.*23.33. *And when this people, or a Prophet, or a Prieſt ſhall aske thee, ſaying, What is the burthen of the Lord? &c.* Nay, hath not the curſed ſinne of loathing this heavenly Manna, beene found among us? Hath not our much Preaching beene

beene accounted a burthen, a wearisomenesse, and a trouble? yea, as here it was once unto the Iewes; a matter of scorne, and reproach? The Lord complaines grievously, in the quoted place, of this sinne; how they tooke up this custome amongst them, concerning the faithfull preaching of all the true Prophets, to aske scoffingly; *what is the burthen of the Lord?* Thus making a scorne of all the right discoverie of their sinnes, and the sound denunciation of Gods Iudgement, calling it by the name of a Burthen; the Lord chargeth them most severely, that they should not use that disdainefull speech any more. Hee tells them, how that they had perverted and abused the holy Word of the ever-living God, the Lord of Hosts: and withall directs them, what phrase of speech they should use, when they speake of his Word sent unto them by his true Prophets; That thus each should demand, in reverence of his Majestie: *what hath the Lord answered*; or, *what hath the Lord spoken?* And to leave off those reproachfull taunting tearmes, *what is the burthen of the Lord?* Or otherwise, hee would surely be avenged of them for this sinne; as we may see in the denunciation following.

Fifthly, *Ier.*7.4,8,9,10,11. *Trust not in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, &c.* They rested upon the outward formes of Gods worship, without reformation. It is just our case. Many amongst us satisfie themselves, and thinke it will serve the turne for salvation, if they rest upon the Sabbath, heare the 5

Word, receive the Sacrament, and conforme to the outward exerciſes of Religion; though they abide in their ſinnes, and have no acquaintance at all with the power of the Word, the Myſterie of Chriſt, converſion to God, or holy converſation.

6 Sixtly, *Iſa. 6. 9, 10. Goe tell this people; Heare yee indeed, but underſtand not; ſee yee indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavie, and ſhut their eyes, leſt &c.* Oh, this is heavie, that a Miniſter ſhould be ſent to a further hardening of a people! And yet it is juſt with God, and they ſhall feele it on their Bed of Death. The Theefe on the Croſſe was converted with a piece of a Sermon, they are not wrought upon after many yeeres: therefore it is juſt with God, as an act of judgement, becauſe they would not come in, after ſo long a time, to give them over to ſuch judiciall hardneſſe.

Conſider theſe things, and tremble all yee that have any wayes ſtrucke at the face of Chriſt, by contempt of his Miniſterie. For the humbling of your ſoules into the duſt, for this horrible ſinne; peruſe in bleeding hearts, in ſecret, that blacke and bloudie Catalogue of fearefull provocations, which are ordinarily to be found in, and certainely ſet upon the Score of ſuch as hate to be reformed under a conſcionable Miniſterie. Which made Chriſt ſay, *Ioh. 15. 22. If I had not come and ſpoken unto them, &c.*

1 1 Deſpiſing it; ſhutting their eyes againſt that glorious Light, erected in their faces, to leade

leade them to Heaven. See *Math.*10.14. *Whosoever ſhall not receive you, nor heare your words, when yee depart out of that houſe, or Citie, ſhake off the duſt of your feet.*

Here is a notable place, to affright all thoſe that are unworthie partakers of the Miniſterie. For the underſtanding whereof, take notice of theſe five points.

1 It is as if they ſhould ſay; Here I have gone a long journey, and have contracted duſt and ſand by my travell, and taken a great deale of paines; and loe, here I ſhake off this duſt, in witneſſe, that you had Chriſt offered you, and you would not accept him.

2 To intimate unto them; I care not for any of you, or yours, but onely I ſeeke the good of your ſoules, I reſpect not ſo much as the duſt; I prize more the converſion of any of your ſoules, than all yours: and this duſt ſhall witneſſe it.

3 They ſhooke off the duſt, as a witneſſe: I will have nothing to doe with this Citie; for I know, the Plagues and Iudgements of God will ſeize on this place, as it was with Sodome and Gomorrah; I will have no communion and ſocietie with theſe wicked people.

4 They did ſhake off the duſt, to intimate that deſtruction ſhould come upon them. For it is ſaid, *Pſalme* 1. That they ſhould be driven away as the duſt: As that is ſhaken with the winde, ſo ſhall they be with the wrath of God.

5 In teſtimonie and witneſſe againſt them: This very duſt ſhall be witneſſe againſt them. Doe you thinke then, that their Sermons and Catechiſing ſhall not? If the duſt that they gathered by their paines, will be witneſſe; what will all their Sermons, and praying, and ſuch paines be? Now this ſinne of deſpiſing the Word, is a ſinne above that of Sodome, *Verſ.* 15. *Verily, it ſhall be more eaſie for Sodome and Gomorrah, in the Day of Iudgement, than for that Citie.*

2 2 Murmuring againſt it, *Ioh.6.41. Luk.15.2.*

3 3 Cavilling againſt it, *Act.13.45.*

4 4 Contemning it, *Ier.44.16. Act.17.18. What will this Babbler ſay?* They accounted *Pauls* precious preaching, vaine babbling.

5 5 Mocking and ſcorning it, *2 Chron.36.16. Act.2.13.*

6 6 Perſecuting it, *Math.10.23.* And ſo they become like mad Dogges throwne into a River, or tyed up in a Chaine, which doe ſnarle at, bite, and teare thoſe that put out their hands to helpe, and ſet them free; fearing, they come to torture and to trouble them more. Iuſt ſo it is with many prophane wretches, which lye drowned in ſinne, and chained in Sathans fetters: If a man put out his hand, by the Miniſterie of the Word, to ſave them from ſinking into Damnation, and to free them from the Snares of everlaſting death; they rage and rayle, they barke and bite like mad Dogges, holding themſelves to be diſquieted, diſgraced, and tormented before their time.

Thus

Thus you have ſeene the ſixe Curſes, and the ſixe Sinnes, that the not profiting by the Word doth bring upon a people.

2 Now, in the ſecond place, let me tender to your moſt ſerious thoughts ſome quickening Motives, for the ſtirring of you up to profit by the Word. 2

1 Some taken from the Word it ſelfe, the Miniſterie whereof you have ſlighted. 1

What then is the bleſſed thing you have ſo wickedly abuſed? It is,

1 The *Word of Salvation*, *Act.* 13.26. No other Word, or created Power, can ſave your ſoules from Hell.

2 The *Word of Truth*, *Eph.* 1.13. There is error in all other Truths, whether Naturall, or Morall, or Politicall: and goe to any Art, there is weakeneſſe and infirmitie in the braine of man, that there can be no certaintie; but here is all Truth, and here is infallibilitie, you need not doubt of any.

3 It is called the *Word of Life*, *Phil.* 2.16. All other Learning whatſoever, when it hath furniſhed you with ornaments and parts, it leaves your ſoules ſtarke dead in ſinnes and treſpaſſes. But this is a *Word of Life*, it inſpires ſpirituall Life, and brings eternall Life.

4 It is called a *word of Reconciliation*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. Let the Sea runne nothing but Gold, and let Heaven and Earth be turned into Gold and Silver, and offered unto God, it could not reconcile us. If all the creatures would loſe their being,

be annihilated, and come to nothing; yet this could not ſave *Iudas*, or any one reprobate: but the Word hath beene a bleſſed inſtrument, for reconciling many ſoules to God.

Quid autem eſt Scriptura ſacra, niſi quædam Epiſtola Omnipotentis Dei ad Creaturam ſuam? Greg. Epiſt. lib. 4. Epiſt. 84.

5 It is, as it were, an Epiſtle or Letter (as one of the Fathers calls it) written from God Almightie unto us miſerable men; wherein hee writes his Will and Word, and ſends it to us: the Miniſters are the readers of it, and they bring the newes from Heaven. And what is the matter of it? Concerning eternall life, or eternall death, concerning the good of your ſoules. Now, if you had a private Letter come from the King, concerning your advancement, or your deliverance and forgiveneſſe for ſome dangerous Treaſon, or both; how would you take this Letter, and how often would you reade it, with what willingneſſe of affection? Now, here is an Epiſtle ſent from Heaven, to adviſe you, that you are all Traitors and Rebels againſt Heaven, and yet here in this Letter, God offers the bloud of his Sonne, and you may be reconciled: and will you neglect it? This is the matter of this Epiſtle; it brings matter of deliverance from the greateſt Curſe that can befall the creature, and the greateſt advancement.

6 It is the bottomeleſſe Treaſurie of all high, ſweet, and excellenteſt things: The Myſterie of the Trinitie, the Majeſtie of God, the Love of God, and of Chriſt; his ſufferings, the Spirits workings, the happineſſe of the Saints, and the glory of Heaven, &c.

7 It

7 It muſt be our Iudge at the laſt day, *Ioh.* 12. 48. Every honeſt Sermon, is but the Word of God unfolded; and a bunch of Arrowes wrapped up, and unfolded, are all one.

8 It onely can cure a wounded Conſcience, the greateſt calamitie that ever the heart of man was acquainted with; and that which no Arme of fleſh, or created Power, no man or Angel, can eaſe at all.

9 In it onely are to be had Deeds and Evidences, to ſhew for eternall Life; and Acquittances, for diſcharge from eternall Death.

10 It hath ſaved all the ſoules that are in Heaven, *Rom.* 10. 13.

11 It onely is the obje&t of divine and infuſed Faith. Humane teſtimonies and authorities beget onely humane Faith: Therefore you muſt reverence this Word. *Muſcul. in Mat. p. 365.*

2 Some Motives taken from the moſt feareſull and curſed eſtate of thoſe who negle&t and reje&t the Miniſterie of the Word, hating to be reformed by it. Marke and take to heart thine unſpeakable miſerie, whoſoever thou art, that deſpiſeſt the Miniſterie: Take a taſte of it, in theſe paſſages. 2

1 They are deprived by this meanes of the love and favour of God, the onely fountaine of all comfort, peace, and glory; which is infinitely the deareſt and moſt unvaluable loſſe, that can be imagined.

2 Of their part and portion in the bloud of Chriſt; one drop whereof, is incomparably more

worth than Heaven and Earth, men and Angels, or the creatures of a thouſand Worlds.

3 Of the fatherly protection, care, and providence of the bleſſed Trinitie, the glorious guard of Angels, the comfortable communion of the bleſſed Saints, and all the ſweet contentments that follow thence.

4 Of the quiet joy and tranquilitie of a good Conſcience; a Iewell farre more worth than the whole World, were it all turned into one unvaluable Pearle of unvaluable price: and of all the heavenly illuminations, cheriſhments, and comforts, wherewith the Holy-Ghoſt is wont to viſit and refreſh the hearts of holy men.

5 Of the ſweet peace and true contentment in this life, and of all comfortable right and religious intereſt to any of the creatures: For, without a good Conſcience, there was never found joy in any mans heart, or ſanctified enjoyment of any thing in the World; and never ſhall any man have a good Conſcience, that gives allowance to any Luſt, or lives delightfully in any ſinne.

6 Of a Crowne of Life, the unſpeakable joyes of Heaven, that immeaſurable and endleſſe comfort that there ſhall be had with all the children of God, Patriarkes, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, all our Chriſtian acquaintance; yea, with the Lord himſelfe, and all Angels; with Chriſt our Saviour and Lambe, ſlaine for us; the Prince of Glory; yea, the Glory of Heaven and Earth, and brightneſſe of the everlaſting Light, &c.

To

To theſe privative conſequents, adde a ſerious conſideration upon thoſe terrible flaming places; *Deut.* 29. 19,20. *Prov.* 1. 23,24. *Iſa.* 6. 9,10. 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *Act.* 13. 46.

By continuing thy contempt, and rejecting the Light of the Goſpel, thou mayeſt come, thou knoweſt not how ſoone, to ſinne againſt the Holy-Ghoſt, as the Phariſes did, *Math.* 12. 24,31.

For ſinne againſt the Holy-Ghoſt may be committed as well,

1 By thoſe, who although they doe acknowledge and confeſſe the Truth, which they doe blaſpheme; yet they have not yet profeſſed it, or given up their names to it, as were thoſe Scribes and Phariſes: and there are many ſuch in theſe dayes, who have not as yet given their name to the Truth, which yet notwithſtanding being well knowne and acknowledged, they doe blaſpheme.

2 As thoſe, who have not only acknowledged in themſelves the Truth that they blaſpheme, but have profeſſed the ſame before others, that are the favourers of Truth; as *Iulian*, *Porphyrius*, *Alexander* the Copper-ſmith, and many others: of which, you may ſee *Heb.* 6. & 10. So, many amongſt us at this day.

3 Some taken from the ſurvey of thoſe judgements, which contempt of the Miniſterie may bring upon the place where it is planted. 3

1 It may remove the *Candleſticke*, and be plagued with the utter loſſe of the Miniſterie. Conſider, *Math.* 8. 34. & 10. 13. & 21. 41.

2 They

2 They may have Prophets, but ſuch as are *fooles*; they may have men of the Spirit, but thoſe that be *mad*, *Hoſ.* 9. 7. By a *foole*, is meant not a naturall, but ſpirituall foole, *Prov.* 1. 8. *Ier.* 4. 22. *Iſa.* 5. 20. By *mad*, is underſtood not a man out of his wit, or diſtracted in minde, but he that like a mad Dogge rageth and rayleth againſt the Truth of God, and ſinceritie of his Saints; which is a great judgement.

3 They may enjoy faithfull Teachers, but to their further hardening, as the Iſraelites did *Iſaiah*, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. Which of all other judgements that God can inflict in this life, is the moſt fearefull.

4 By this meanes, they may make ſad the heart and affections of their Teachers, that they cannot with that chearefulneſſe as they deſire, performe the offices of their Miniſterie: Which as it diſcourageth the Teachers, (and will one day light heavie on the cauſers and procurers thereof) ſo it is unprofitable for the hearers, and deprives them of much good they might otherwiſe enjoy; as appeares, *Heb.* 13. 17.

4 Some from conſideration of thoſe confuſions and deſolations, which it pulls with great violence even upon whole Kingdomes. Looke upon ſuch places as theſe: 2 *Chron.* 36. 16, 17, *&c.* *Ier.* 25. 3. *&c.* *& Cap.* 35. 15. *Rev.* 6. 4. *&c.*

The glorious Light of thoſe ſeven Candleſtickes in Aſia, mentioned in the *Revelations*, was long ſince, for their unfruitfulneſſe, coldneſſe, and contempt of the Word, turned into the darke Mid-

Midnight of Hereſie, Apoſtaſie, and Mahometiſme. Rome, that was anciently the glory of the Weſterne Churches, lyes now drowned in Superſtition, ſoaking in damnable Idolatry, and plunged over head and eares in the Doctrine of Devils. Many ſtrong and noble Limbes of the reformed Churches in high Germanie have lyen for ſome yeeres in their teares of bloud, groaning under the mercileſſe tyrannie of the bloudie Antichriſtians, and have wofully received the *marke of the Beaſt* againe. Now aſſuredly, it was the loathing the heavenly Manna, which made the Lord to *utter his Voice* before the Armie of the enemies at Prague, and other places. It was their ſpirituall coldneſſe, which ſharpened the Papiſts ſwords againſt them: It was their not entertaining the Truth, with the love and power of it, which gave the Imperiallifts power over them. *Joel* 2. 11.

3 In a third place, take ſome helpes and remedies, to become profitable hearers and ſaving proficients by the Miniſterie you enjoy; which hath thus long beene (it is a reproachfull and rufull thing I ſpeake) *the ſavour of death unto death* unto the moſt. 3

1 Be perſwaded to beleeve and obey the bleſſed Commandement of our Saviour himſelfe, *Math. 6. 32. Seeke ye firſt the Kingdome of God, and the righteouſneſſe thereof*, in the firſt place; *and all other things ſhall be added to you.* To which bee quickened, by conſidering, 1

1 To what end wee came into this World. What

What a wofull and bewitched people are they, who being reaſonable creatures, having an underſtanding Light, like the Angels of God; having eyes in their heads, to fore-ſee the wrath that is to come; hearts in their bodies, that can tremble as the leaves of the Foreſt, which are ſhaken with the winde; Conſciences, that are capable of unſpeakable horror; bodies and ſoules, which can burne in Hell for ever: and yet ſome have lived twentie, ſome thirtie, ſome fortie, ſome ſixtie yeeres; and yet to this day, have not learnt one ſound ſpirituall Leſſon, for the true good of their ſoules, either out of the Booke of God, the Booke of Nature, the Workes of God, or any other way? Why, to what end doe you thinke were you created, and put into this World? To eate, and drinke, and ſleepe; to lye, and ſweare, and root in the Earth; to Dice and Card, and goe in the Faſhion; to contemne the Miniſterie; ſhamefully to belye, ſlander, and rayle upon Gods people, as too preciſe; to die, and then not to be damned? Aſſuredly, thou waſt not borne, and placed upon the Earth, for to ſerve thine owne turne, to pleaſe thine owne heart, to follow thine owne wayes, to live for a while like a Beaſt in ſenſuall contentments, and then to goe to Hell. Certainely, thou waſt ſent into this World for ſome other end, for ſome greater buſineſſe and important affaire; even for that *One neceſſarie thing*, *Luke* 10. 42. to know, ſerve, and obey thy God, and to ſave that precious Soule of thine in the Day of Chriſt; to ſeeke firſt the Kingdome of Heaven, to know and feele the vertue

See *Whately*, *pag.* 123.

tue of Christs death and resurrection. This, I say, is that *One necessarie thing*: All other things are but respectively necessarie, so farre as they further this end; ought onely to be subordinate, and contributorie; nay, to be accounted but *drosse* and *dung*, to this, *Phil.* 3. 10.

2 Consider, that upon this moment depends eternitie.

3 *What is a man profited, if he shall gaine the whole World, and lose his owne soule? Math.* 16. 26.

4 The difference of the life and death of the Christian and Carnallist.

2 Take the counsell of the holy Apostle, *Col.* 3. 16. *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, &c.*

1 By hearing it *in season, and out of season*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. Preachers and hearers, are relatives. Christian hearers in ancient times heard their Pastours day after day.

(1) [a] *Because yesterday wee made mention of the Theefe, &c.* saith *Ambrose*. Which implyes his preaching the day before.

(2) [b] *You that were here yesterday, &c.* Which implyes his preaching the day before. In another place: [c] *I suppose, you remember how farre we discoursed yesterday: from that very place, let us to day begin.* Elsewhere he saith: [d] *From whence we spake much yesterday.* Againe; [e] *Yesterday we came even to that Verse, &c.* [f] *Yesterdayes Sermon was protracted, &c.*

See my Booke of walking with God, pag. 158.

See *Chrysostome* upō the place.

About which, see *Chrys. tom.* 5. *serm. contra Gulam, p.* 828, 829.

2

1

See *Austin. conf. lib.* 6. *pag.* 161.

a *Quoniam hesterno die de latrone fecimus mentionem, &c. Ambros. de sancto latrone, serm.* 44.

b *Qui hesterno die affuistis, &c. August. in Ps.* 33. *Conc.* 2.

c *Quousque hesterno die disputatum sit, credo meminisse charitatem vestram, ex ipso loco hodie sumamus exordium. Idem in Psal.* 34 *Conc.* 2. d *Unde hesterno die multum locuti sumus. Idem Expos. in Johan. pag.* 12. e *Hesterno die pervexeramus autem usque ad istum versum, &c. Idem in Psal.* 48. *Conc.* 2. f *Hesternus sermo protractus, &c. Idem in Psal.* 58. *Conc.* 2.

g Poſterior pars Pſalmi, de quo heſterno die locuti ſumus, &c. Idem in Pſal. 78. Conc. 2.

h Heſterno die Pſal. brevior tractabatur, &c. Idem in Pſal. 142.

i Primùm igitur perſuadeamus, ut iuramentorum fuga in melius mutationem faciat: etſi enim heri & nudius tertius de hâc vobis locutus ſum materiâ, neque tamen hodie deſiſtam, neque cras, neque perendie, eadem perſuadere. Chryſoſt. ad Pop. Antioch. Hom. 5. See him in Matth. 15. Hom. 53. pag. 304. at *

k Movent me quidem (fratres) ad hunc ſermonem veſpertina ſpectacula, &c. Baſil the great, Serm. in ebriet. & luxum, quibus die Paſchæ populum affectum vidit, pag. 331.

g *The latter part of the Pſalme, of which wee ſpake yeſterday, &c.* h *Yeſterday a ſhorter Pſalme was handled.*

(3) i *Firſt therefore let us perſwade you, that you would amend and abandon your Oathes: For although I ſpake of the ſame matter yeſterday, and the day before that; yet notwithſtanding, I will not ceaſe to day, nor to morrow, nor the day after that, to perſwade the ſame things.* Whence it appeares, that hee preached the day before, and the day before that; and would preach the day following, and the day after that.

(4) k *Yeſterdayes ſight (Brethren) provoked me to this Sermon, &c.* This Sermon was made upon Eaſter Monday; and no doubt, he had preached on Eaſter day.

(5) l *Yeſterday, &c. To day wee will diſcourſe briefely of Baptiſme, and the benefits that flow from thence to us: Although yeſterday our ſpeech did flow more haſtily from us, both becauſe the time did urge, as alſo leaſt length of ſpeech ſhould beget diſdaine and ſatietie: for the ſatietie of ſpeech is no leſſe an enemie to the eares, than too much meate is to the body.* Theſe Orations were divine, and as Sermons; and this was made on the day immediately after an holy-day. The Greeke Church at that time celebrated the day of Chriſts Baptiſme.

l Heſterno die &c. hodie de Baptiſmo ac beneficio inde ad nos promanante, breviter diſſeremus. Heſternâ luce non oratio præterfluxit, tum quia tempus urgebat, tum ne faſtidium ſatietatemque ſermonis prolixitas pareret. Sermonis quippe ſatietas non minus auribus inimica eſt, quam cibus immodicus corpori. Nazianzen. Tom. 2. Orat. 40. in ſanctum Baptiſma, pag. 614.

(6) m *If*

(6) m *If you remember, in yeſterdayes Sermon, &c.* *Chryſoſtome* in his tenth Homily upon *Geneſis*, expoſtulating with his people, becauſe they were ſo few, tells them, That every houre of the day is ſeaſonable to heare a Sermon; nay, the very night is not unſeaſonable, for ſuch a purpoſe: urging for proofe thereof, the place I preſt before, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. and *Pauls* practice, *Act.* 20. preaching untill midnight. Theſe are his words. n *What meanes it, that there is a leſſe aſſembly of you to day, and not ſo frequent a multitude of thoſe, who flocke to us? For it is not ſo with ſpirituall things as with humane, which are divided to determined times: Every time of the day is fit for a ſpirituall Sermon. And what doe I ſay, the day time? yea, if the night ſhould come upon us, it doth not prejudice or hinder ſpirituall teaching. For both Paul writing to Timothy, ſaid:* Be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, &c. *And againe, heare bleſſed S. Luke, ſaying:* Paul being about to depart on the morrow, prolonged his Sermon to the middle of the night. *Tell mee, I pray thee, did the time hinder? Was therefore his word of Doctrine hindered?*

Auſtin ſometimes preached thrice upon the ſame day. o *Doe not wonder, deare Brethren, if I have preached thrice to day, God aſſiſting me: There hath happened to day a fearefull chance, &c.*

m *Si meminiſtis heſterno ſermone, &c. Bernard. in Pſal. Qui habitat, &c. Serm.* 12. *pag.* 846.

n *Quidnam ſibi vult, quod minor eſt hodiè veſter conventus & infrequens theatrum earum qui ad nos confluunt? Non enim ut humana res, ita & ſpirituales ad certa tempora diſtincta ſunt. Sermoni ſpirituali omne diei tempus idoneum fuerit. Et quid dico diei tempus? Neque ſi nox ingruat, ſpirituali doctrinæ præiudicat. Propterea & Timotheo Paulus ſcribens dicebat,* Inſta tempeſtivè, intempeſtivè, &c. *Et iterum audi beatum Lucam, dicentem:* Diſceſſurus craſtino Paulus, &c. Sermonem produxit ad mediam noctem. *Num tempus obſuit, dic quæſo? Num propterea doctrinæ ſermo impeditus?*

o *Non miremini, fratres chariſſimi, ſi hodiè ter ſermonem, Deo auxiliante perfecero. Accidit hodiè terribilis caſus, &c. Tom.* 10. *part.* 2. *ad fratres in Eremo, Serm.* 33.

Chryſoſtome

Chryſoſtome in the Evening, as we may ſee in his eleventh Homily upon 1 *Theſſ.* 5. ſaith hee: *Even as, if any one ſhould caſt water on the wicke of this Candle, or ſhould onely take away the Oyle, hee would put out the Light; ſo is it with the gift of the Spirit.* He tooke his example from the Lampe that burnt by him when he was preaching, and ſayes; *You may quench this Lampe, by putting in water; and you may quench it, by taking out the Oyle.*

Quemadmodum ſiquis lucis huius lychnos aquam inſpergeret, aut oleum duntaxat eximeret, lucem extingueret: Ita habet & donum Spiritus.

And great *Baſil* alſo the like. *The Evening and the Morning* (ſaith he) *is made one Day. But theſe our Sermons concerning that Evening, now begun from this Evening, doe here put an end to our words.*

Facta eſt igitur veſpera, inquit, & factum eſt mane, dies unus. Sed hi noſtri de illâ veſperâ ſermones ab hâc veſpera iam occupati, hic orationi noſtræ finem imponunt. Hexam. Hom. 2. *ad finem.*

Chryſoſtome almoſt in all his Homilies upon *Geneſis*, ſaith in the beginning of his Sermon: *Heri, &c. Yeſterday I handled this or that, or the like.* See 1. *Hom.* 7. 2. *Hom.* 14. 3. *Hom.* 17. 4. *Hom.* 18. 5. *Hom.* 24. 6. *Hom.* 27. 7. *Hom.* 28. 8. *Hom.* 31. 9. *Hom.* 34. 10. *Hom.* 40. 11. *Hom.* 44. 12. *Hom.* 46. 12. *Hom.* 48. 13. *Hom.* 52. 14. *Hom.* 53. 15. *Hom.* 54. 16. *Hom.* 55. 17. *Hom.* 56. 18. *Hom.* 57. 19. *Hom.* 58. 20. *Hom.* 59. 21. *Hom.* 63. 22. *Hom.* 65.

Auſtin preached twice a day.

Obiect. Except perhaps they preached every day onely in Lent, &c. or beſides the Lords day, but onely upon holy-dayes, and their Eves.

Anſw. Heare *Chryſoſtome* ſpeaking generally. * *It is neceſſarie, that a Biſhop ſhould ſowe his Seed every day, as I may ſo ſay; that at the leaſt, by that dayly cuſtome of Teaching, the mindes of his hearers may retaine his words.*

See *Conc.* 2. *in Pſal.* 88.

* *Vnde Epiſcopũ neceſſe eſt in ſingulos vt ſic dicam dies ſementem facere, vt ipſa ſalte aſſuetudine doctrinæ ſermonẽ auditorum animi retinere poſſint.* De Sacerd. l. 6.

Auſtin

Auſtin hath the like. *The Word of God, which is dayly opened unto us, and after a ſort broken to us, is our dayly Bread: And as our bellies hunger for that Bread, ſo doe our mindes for this.*

Verbum Dei quod quotidiè nobis aperitur & quodam modo frangitur, panis quotidianus eſt: & quomodo illum panem ventres, ſic iſtum æſuriunt menies. Auguſt. Hom. 42. Ex. 50.

Object. If former and Primitive Times were ſo full of Preaching, how commeth it to paſſe, that our dayes will ſcarce downe with twice a Sabbath? Sith the ancient Fathers preached dayly, how happeneth it, that many reputed great Schollers in theſe Times, preach ſo ſeldome? &c.

Anſw. First, one Reaſon may be an affected humour of man-pleaſing, or ſelfe-preaching; which is ambitiouſly purſued, and mightily prevailes abroad in the World.

This, King *Iames* out of his deepe and Princely wiſedome, conceived to be the cauſe of ſo many dayly defections from our Religion, both to Poperie and Anabaptiſme. He calls it *a light affected, and an unprofitable kind of Teaching, which hath beene of late yeeres too much taken up in Vniverſities, Cities, and Countrey: In which* (ſaith he) *there is a muſtering up of much reading, and a diſplaying of their owne wits, &c.* Theſe are his owne words, in the Reaſons of his direction for Preaching.

See *Inſtructions of comforting afflicted Conſciences, pag. 154.*

Now you muſt know, that to the ſcraping and patching together of the gariſh and gawdie paintings and unprofitable Pompe of a ſelfe-Sermon, there is required and ordinarily expected ſuch a deale of curioſitie, varietie of extraordinarie conceits, and trickes of wit; that it puts the Pen-man to a great deale of paines, and tortures his wit extremely. He dives with much adoe into the dung-

See *Auſt. Conf. lib. 6. cap. 6.*

hill of many a Popiſh Poſtiller, and phantaſticall Frier, &c. For ſuch, as *Tully* ſaid of *Anthony*, do *magno conatu magnas nugas agere*; they ſweat at it, with much vexing anxietie: And what then? *Parturiunt montes, &c.* they detaine & delude the itching eares of unjudicious hearers with a little ayrie nouriſhment, as the King ſpeakes in the fore-cited place.

The painfulneſſe then of this unprofitable way of Preaching; the irkeſome tediouſneſſe of committing of it ſo punctually and preciſely to memorie; the feareſulneſſe of deliverie, and danger of being out; vaine-glorious doubting, that they ſhall not be applauded as they were wont; feare, leſt the next time they ſhould leſſen their former reputation of wit and reading, &c.

Secondly, another Reaſon may be, becauſe Miniſters doe not ſo much meditate and ſtudy divine and heavenly things, but trouble themſelves too much in the affaires of the World. Therefore the ancient Fathers, ſpending their time, wits, and underſtanding wholly upon heavenly things, diving continually into the myſteries of Gods Booke, and preaching dayly, were able to preach often, and excellently: by their Miniſteriall diligence and faithfulneſſe, they attained ſuch a happie readineſſe and habit, and ſo enriched themſelves with heavenly ſtore, that they were able, as occaſion was offered, to *bring forth out of their Treaſure things new and old*; whereupon they were enabled to preach ſometimes upon ſhort warning: So *Baſil* preached his two Sermons upon the ſixe dayes worke, when he had but that morning for meditation. Sometimes,

Perlatum ad nos eſt Reverendiſſ. fratrem noſtrum Baſilium, Epiſcop. velut unum, de Laicis, &c. Greg. ep. l. 8. c. 11. & in Evang. Hom. 17. Col. 381. & Paſt. Cur. p. 2. Col. 1148.

Rogatus quoque, (ſpeaking of Auſtin) à nonnullis in eorū temporalibus cauſis, Epiſtolas ad diverſos dabat; Sed hanc ſuam à meliùs rebus occupationē tanquam angariā deputabat, ſuavem ſemper habens diſputationis, quæ Dei ſunt, vel allocutionem vel collocutionem fraternæ ac domeſticæ familiaritatis. Poſſid. de vit. Aug.

times, without any premeditation; ſo it ſeemes he preached his ſecond Sermon. And ſo did *Auſtin* his Sermon, upon *Pſal.* 95. It ſeemes there, his Brother *Severus* failing to come, he preached himſelfe. And I have told you heretofore of a Sermon which he made upon a ſudden, occaſioned by an heavie accident. And theſe Sermons were ſuch, that they have bin thought worthy by the Church from time to time, to be conveyed and communicated to poſterity. For in all my diſcourſe, I am ſo farre from giving any allowance to idle, impertinent, or any way unſubſtantiall Preaching; that I hold it a very irkſome, and loathſome, and wicked thing, lyable to that heavie Curſe; *Curſed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently.* But let a man be well grounded before he begin, be godly himſelfe, ply faithfully and painefully his Miniſteriall charge, *in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*; and it is incredible to what he may attaine in the Point I purſue, by his much exerciſe, and Gods bleſſing upon it.

De Baptiſmo referente D D. Donne.

See ad fratres in Eremo, Serm. 33.

But yet ſome ſay,

Firſt, That a man cannot preach well, under a quarter of a yeeres proviſion. See the truth hereof, in the fore-going Reaſons.

Secondly, That often Preaching will make it too cheape, and contemptible; which to affirme, is a baſe and carnall wrangling, and confuted by the practice of the Fathers.

Thirdly, That Reading is to be preferred before Preaching.

Wee doe not denie, but that the Word read, is the rule of holineſſe, may convert, the Spirit ac-

 companying

companying his Ordinance; and therefore is to have place, and due reſpect in the Congregation: but wee will not equall it to Preaching. If Reading were more excellent, and of greater force to convert, than Preaching; why are not the people converted, that have a Reader? To what end then ſerve Schooles of the Prophets? Wherefore ſhould men ſtudie the knowledge of Tongues, and Arts, to divide the Word aright, and to diſtribute to every mans preſent neceſſities? And why ſhould Sathan rage more againſt Preachers, than Readers; except the Word powerfully delivered did not the more batter and beat downe his Kingdome? Beſides, why did not Chriſt ſend out his Apoſtles with this charge, *Goe, reade*; but, *Goe, preach to all Nations?* Wherefore doth *Paul* pronounce a *Woe* to them that *preach* not the Goſpel? And why did hee not charge his ſonne *Timothy* before God, to *reade in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon?*

Object. Yea, but may ſome ſay, The ancient Fathers were extraordinarie men, and therefore no Patternes for our Preaching, &c. They were glorious Lights, and wee but Glow-wormes; they were Cedars, wee but Shrubs, &c.

Anſw. Let them be what they were, I as much reverence and reſpect them, as any man alive, if wee take truth and diſcretion with us. And therefore at this time, I will ſuppoſe (I ſay ſo, becauſe I doubt not, but our Age hath brought forth as worthy Divines, if not worthier, as any of the ancient Fathers;) I ſay, I will ſuppoſe them to be as it were Gyants, and wee Dwarfes: Yet ſet a Dwarfe

Dwarfe upon a Gyants ſhoulders, and hee will ſee further, and ſo might certainely wee, but for Slouth, Idleneſſe, Worldlineſſe, Ambition, and other ſuch baſe and vile degenerations of theſe later Times.

It may be further objected, That there was more neceſſity of the Fathers frequent Preaching, eſpecially in thoſe Primitive Times, for more plentifull publiſhing and propagation of the Goſpel, &c. and ſuppreſſing Hereſies, &c. *Obiect.*

Paſſingly weake, and untrue. There is farre more need of much Preaching now, than in former times. For wee live in the *laſt dayes*, wherein thoſe *perillous times* are come upon us, which *Paul* fore-tells 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. *&c.* and wherein *iniquitie abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold, &c. Math.* 24. 12. And at this day wee oppoſe the *Hydra* of all Hereſies, Poperie; which oppoſeth even the whole Body of Chriſtianitie. Againe, their Homilies are againſt Drunkenneſſe, Pride, Swearing, Luxury, Covetouſneſſe, love of the World, Vſury, painted Faces, falſe Haire, Anger, Envie, Ambition, &c. All which ſinnes, and many more, reigne and rage at this day with more hainouſneſſe, and an higher hand, than heretofore. *Anſw.*

2 A ſecond meanes whereby the Word may dwell plentifully in us, is, by a conſtant and conſcionable reading the Booke of God. This Exerciſe is commanded to Kings and Captaines, *Deut.* 17. 17, 18, 19. *Ioſh.* 1. 8. who may ſeeme moſt priviledged, by their intanglement in many and weightie affaires. 2

Chriſt bids the Iewes, *Ioh.* 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures*, as the well-ſpring of eternall life. The Holy-Ghoſt commends the Iewes of Berea, as more noble than they of Theſſalonica, becauſe they received the Word with all readineſſe of minde, and ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo, *Act.* 17. 11. See *Deut.* 6, 7, 8, 9. See many Motives to this dutie, before: It is the Word of Salvation, of Truth, of Life, of Reconciliation, a Letter from Heaven, a Treaſurie of all excellent things: it ſhall judge us, it onely can heale a wounded Soule; it containes all our evidence for Heaven, and it is the object of divine Faith, &c.

Nay, and becauſe the Papiſts have wickedly dammed up this Fountaine of Life from the common people, heare the judgement and zeale of Antiquitie, in preſſing this dutie.

First, heare *Chryſoſtome*.

* *Heare, I pray you, all yee Lay-men*, (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) *get yee Bibles, a Medicine for your Soules, &c. You caſt all upon our ſhoulders. You ought onely to be inſtructed of us, but your Wives and Children ſhould be by you, &c. But now adayes, your Children preferre divelliſh Songs and Dancings, even as Cookes, and Caters, and leaders of Dances, but none knowes any Pſalme.*

The ſame *Chryſoſtome*, to ſtirre up men to diligent reading the Scriptures, maketh good this aſſertion; *There is no affliction or miſerie of body or ſoule, but may receive a Medicine out of Gods Booke.*

1 A man heavie-hearted, and of a ſad ſpirit, (ſaith hee) takes the Bible in his hand; after hee hath

* *Audite, obſecro, ſeculares omnes, Comparate vobis Biblia, animæ Pharmaca, &c. Omnia humeris noſtris injicitis. Vos oportebat duntaxat à nobis inſtitui, uxores vero à vobis & liberos. Nunc vero Sataniccas cantiones ac ſaltationes præferunt pueri veſtri, quemadmodum Coci, & Obſonatores, & Chorearum ductores; Pſalmum autem nemo novit ullũ. Chryſoſt. in 3. ad Coloſſ. Hom. 9. Col. 1054.*

hath met with that place, *Pſal.*42.11. (*Why art thou caſt downe, O my ſoule, and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? hope thou in God,&c.*) he is refreſhed.

2 Another (ſaith he) is oppreſſed with extreme povertie, beholds the wicked wallow in worldly wealth, and flouriſh like a greene Bay-tree: But after hee hath caſt his eye upon that, *Pſal.*55.22. (*Caſt thy burthen upon the Lord, and hee ſhall ſuſtaine thee,&c.*) he is comforted.

3 Another is hunted with calumnies and inſidiations, &c. and no humane helpe will be had; the Prophet (ſaith hee) doth teach him what to doe, in theſe words: * *They did ſpeake againſt me, but I prayed.*

4 Another is forſaken even of his friends and kinſmen, and contemned of thoſe who were moſt beholding to him: Heare how the Prophet behaved himſelfe in ſuch a caſe, *Pſal.*38.11. *&c.* 13. *&c.*

He concludes thus: * *Thou haſt ſeene, whenſoever any calamitie doth oppreſſe a man, how convenient an Antidote he may take from the Scriptures, and all care of this life may be driven backe, neither ſhould we be grieved for any thing that falls out. Therefore, I beſeech you, that you would come hither, and diligently attend to the reading of the holy Scriptures; not onely when you come hither, but even at home take the holy Bible into your hands, and goe reape the profit that is in them with great earneſtneſſe. Moreover, what that ſenſible Bread doth to encreaſe bodily ſtrength, that Reading doth to the ſoule; for it is ſpirituall nouriſhment, and makes the ſoule vigorous,&c.*

* *Ipſi detrahebant mihi, ego autem orabam.*

* *Vidiſti quomodo, quacunque calamitate humanam naturam premente, conveniens ex Scripturis antidotum accipere liceat, & omnis huius vitæ repellatur cura, neq; ab ullo quod accidit grave. mur? Propterea obſecro, ut ſubinde hanc veniatis, & divinæ Scripturæ lectionem diligenter auſcultetis; non ſolum cum hac veniatis ſed & domi divina Biblia in manus ſumite, & utilitatem in illis poſitam magno ſtudio ſuſcipite. Inſuper, quod ad augendas vires corporis ſenſibilis ille cibus facit, id anima lectio facit. Spirituale enim alimentum eſt, & fontem reddit animam. Chryſoſt. Hom.29. in Gen. pag.150.*

But wee may adde to *Chryſoſtomes* Antidotes, theſe 16. more.

1 Art thou wearie of the wayes of vanitie, and comming on with a grieved and ſorrowfull heart for thy ſinne, to meet thy deare Redeemer; and doth the conceit of the number and hainouſneſſe of thy tranſgreſſions, croſſe and confound thy hopes of being received to mercy? Why then looke upon *Paul*; he ſhed the bloud of the Saints with extraordinarie rage and furie, *Act.9.1.* upon *Manaſſeh*, a man of prodigious impietie, 2 *Chron.* 33.6. upon ſome of *Peters* hearers, who crucified the Lord of Life, *Act.2.23.* If theſe will not ſerve the turne, looke upon *Adam*; who caſt away himſelfe, and undid all, and was the cauſe that all that iſſued out of his loines, unto the Worlds end, fell into the damnation of Hell: and yet all theſe, upon repentance, were received unto mercie. And therefore, if thou canſt now heartily repent, feare no former ſinnes.

2 Haſt thou by the violence of Sathans temptations, the ſlie enticements of thine owne ſinfull nature, and the cunning inſinuations of thy former boſome-ſinne, beene fearefully overtaken with ſome ſcandalous fall, ſince thou waſt converted, and gave thy Name unto Grace; and upon illumination of thy conſcience, remorſe, and meditation of returne, thou art aſhamed to look Chriſt Ieſus in the face, becauſe thou haſt ſo ſhamed thy profeſſion; and thou art ſo troubled with horror and conceit, that thy caſe is ſingular, that thou canſt find no caſe to thine humbled and ſorrowfull heart?

heart? Why then looke upon *David*, *Peter*, &c. transcendent instances, that thou may not sinke into despaire.

3 Art thou plunged into the perplexities and fearfull apprehensions of a spiritual desertion? Art thou deprived of thy former comfortable feelings of Gods favorable countenance? Hast thou no comfort in prayer? &c. Looke upon *David*, *Ps.* 77.

4 It may be, upon thy Bed of Death, * when Sathan will make thy sinnes appeare farre more ugly and horrible to the eye of thy Conscience, than ever hee did before; and will perswade thee all he can, that all thy holy services unto God, and new obedience, was quite marred with Pride, Hypocrisie, and by-respects; I say, it may be then thy heart will quite faile thee, and thy conceit of Gods wrathfull and angry countenance for thy sinne, may so oppresse and confound thy soule, that thou mayest feare lest thou be forsaken: Why then thinke upon thy Saviours mournfull cry upon the Crosse; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

* See Sathans depth in this point, *Helpe to Devotion*, p. 155.

5 It may be thou art a true-hearted *Nathanael*, in whose spirit there is no guile; hates all sinne heartily, both in thy selfe and others, desirest and laborest to please God in all things, and to keepe a good conscience before all things in the World; and yet thou findest and feelest in thy brest many times a heavy, sad, and unchearefull heart: why then, heare *David*, a man after Gods owne heart, of a more excellent spirit, and eminent graces, than thou art, complaining *Psal.* 43. 5. *Why art thou so heavie, O my soule, and why art thou so disquieted within me?*

6 Art

6 Art thou grievouſly troubled with the haunt and horror of ſome ſpeciall ſinne, of which thou canſt not be ſo eaſily rid; and doeſt thou therefore goe mourning all the day? Why then looke alſo upon *David*, *Pſal.* 32. In ſuch a caſe, he *roared all the day, his bones were conſumed, and his native moiſture was turned into the drought of Summer.*

7 Art thou vexed to the heart, and fearefully haunted with ſome horrible and hatefull injections of Sathan; thoughts framed by himſelfe immediately, and put into thee; perhaps tending to Atheiſme, or to the diſhonour of God in ſome high degree, or to the diſgrace of his Word, or ſelfe-deſtruction, &c. or the like: thoughts which thou canſt not remember, without horror; and dareſt not reveale, or name, for their ſtrange and prodigious hatefulneſſe? Why then conſider, how this malicious Fiend dealt with the Sonne of God: He ſuggeſted unto his moſt holy and unſpotted imagination, theſe propoſitions: firſt, Murther; Make away thy ſelfe, *Math.* 4. 6. ſecondly, Fall downe and worſhip the Devill, *Verſ.* 9. What more fearefull and horrible apprehenſions? And yet theſe were ſuggeſted to our bleſſed Saviour; to him perhaps more ſenſibly, to thee more ſecretly. * His pure and holy heart, uncapable of ſinne, did reject them with infinite contempt; and himſelfe did utterly conquer and confound the Tempter, and that for thee, and thy ſake too. And if thine heart riſe againſt, abominate, abandon, grieve, and be humbled for them, they ſhall never be layd to thy charge, but ſet on Sathans

* See *Dike*, of Chriſts temptations, p. 219.

Sathans Score. For all them, thou mayeſt goe on chearefully and comfortably in the courſe of Chriſtianitie: And ſo doe. And let not Sathan attaine his divelliſh end by them; which is, to worke aſtoniſhment in thy minde, horror in thy conſcience, heavineſſe in thy heart, diſtractions in thy thoughts, &c. that thereby thou mayeſt be disheartened and diſabled for the chearefull diſcharge and performance both of thy particular and generall calling. Or elſe, art thou long after thy converſion, aſſaulted with perhaps ſorer ſpirituall pangs, and more horror, than at thy change? Conſider *David*, *Iob*, *Hezekiah*.

8 Haſt thou loſt thy goods, or children? Doth the Wife that lyes in thy boſome, ſet her ſelfe againſt thee? Doe thy neereſt friends charge thee falſely? Art thou diſeaſed from top to toe? Doe the Arrowes of the Almightie ſticke faſt in thy ſoule? Thy affliction is grievous enough, if thou haſt any of theſe. But doe they all, in the greateſt extremitie, concurre upon thee at once? Haſt thou loſt all thy children, and all thy goods? Doth thy Wife afflict thy afflictions? &c. If this be not thy caſe, thou commeſt ſhort of *Iob*, a moſt juſt man, and high in Gods favour.

9 Haſt thou given thy Name to Religion, and art a Profeſſor of Grace; and art thou therefore villanouſly traduced with many ſlanderous nicknames, and odious imputations? Art thou called *Puritan*, *Preciſian*, *Hypocrite*, *Humoriſt*, *Diſſembler*, &c? Why, graceleſſe wretches, when hee was upon

upon Earth,called Chriſt Ieſus,*Devill.* See *Math.* 10. 25. *Ioh.* 7. 20. Contemne thou therefore for ever,the utmoſt malice of the moſt ſcurrill tongue.

10 Art thou a loving and tender-hearted Mother unto thy Children, and haſt thou loſt thy deareſt? Why,the bleſſed Mother of Chriſt ſtood by,and ſaw her owne onely deare innocent Sonne, the Lord of Life, moſt cruelly and villanouſly murthered upon the Croſſe,and die a ſhamefull death before her eyes, *Ioh.* 19. 25.

11 Art thou a woman,who in the time of thy travaile art preſſed with many wants; with want of comfortable companie,deſired helpes,a fairer roome, and other worldly comforts and conveniences? Why yet comfort thy ſelfe with this; That holy Virgin,which brought into the World the Worlds Saviour, brought forth that bleſſed Babe in a Stable, and laid him in a Cratch, *Luke* 2. 7. It is very like,farre more poorely,in reſpect of worldly comforts,than the pooreſt ſort of women amongſt us; with leſſe comfortable helpers, and in a leſſe ſeemely and commodious place, for ſuch a purpoſe.

12 Hath thy Faith loſt its feeling; and beſides, doth God looke upon thee with an angry countenance, and is thy heart filled with heavineſſe and horror? Yet for all this, let the hand of Faith by no meanes looſe it hold-faſt upon the precious ſufferings and ſaving bloud-ſhed of thy deare Redeemer. Thou haſt before thee,a matchleſſe and tranſcendent precedent in this point.

Thus

Thus cryes holy *Iob*, having, beſides his unparalelled varietie and extremitie of outward afflictions, *the Arrowes of the Almightie* ſticking faſt in him, and drinking up his ſpirits; *Though hee kill me, yet will I truſt in him, Cap.*13.15. So *Abraham*, *Rom.*4.18.

13 Doeſt thou, day after day, poure out thy ſoule in prayer before the Throne of Grace, with all the earneſtneſſe and inſtancie thou canſt poſſibly; and doeſt thou ſtill riſe up dull and heavie, and uncomforted, without anſwer from God, or comfortable ſence of his favour and love ſhed into thine heart? Why, yet pray ſtill; aſſuredly, at length thou ſhalt be gloriouſly refreſhed, and regiſtred in the remembrance of God, for a Chriſtian of excellent faith. See a patterne of rare and extraordinarie patience this way, *Math.*15.23. *&c.*

14 Doth the World, Sathan, carnall men, thine owne friends, formall Teachers, ſuppoſe and cenſure thee to be a diſſembler in thy profeſſion, and will needes concurrently and confidently faſten upon thee the imputation of Hypocriſie? Why, yet for all this, let thy ſincere heart, conſcious to it ſelfe of it owne truth in holy ſervices, like a ſtrong Pillar of Braſſe, beat backe and reject with noble contempt and glorious diſdaine, all their impoyſoned Arrowes of malice and ſlander this way. Thou haſt a right worthy patterne in the Booke of God, for this purpoſe. *Iob* had againſt him not onely the Devill, his enemie, puſhing at him with his poyſoned weapons; but even his owne friends, ſcourging him with their tongues;

tongues; yea, his owne Wife a Thorne, pricking him in the eye; yea, his owne God miſerably laſhing his naked ſoule with Scorpions; powerfull motives, to make him ſuſpect himſelfe of former halting and hollow-heartedneſſe in the wayes of God: yet notwithſtanding all this, his good and honeſt heart having beene long before acquainted with and knit unto his God with ſinceritie and truth, makes him boldly and reſolutely to proteſt;

Job 27. 5,6. *That until he die, he will never take away his innocencie from himſelfe; that he would keepe his righteouſneſſe, and not forſake it, and that his heart ſhould not reprove him for his dayes.*

15 Haſt thou an untoward Wife, that is a continuall dropping and a perpetuall Goade in thy ſide? Heare *Iobs* complaint, *Cap.* 19.17. *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife, though I entreated for the childrens ſake of mine owne body.*

16 Art thou vexed with a prophane dogged Husband? *Abigail*, a Wife, and precious woman, had a *Nabal* to her yoke-fellow.

Thus theſe patternes and precedents in the Booke of God, purpoſely regiſtred for the refreſhing and recoverie of his choſen, in ſpirituall or temporall ſtraits, are ordinarily propoſed in a tranſcendent and matchleſſe degree; that in their greateſt extremities, by reflecting their eyes upon ſuch examples, they may be preſerved from deſpaire, have the ſtronger conſolation, and not thinke their caſes to be comfortleſſe and ſingular. Let theſe conſiderations move us to be well read in theſe holy myſteries, and day and night exerciſed in

in reading and meditating on them. But to our purpoſe, heare further what others ſay in this Point.

Secondly, heare *Gregorie* the great.

[a] *What is the ſacred Scripture, but a certaine Epiſtle of the omnipotent God to his creature? And ſurely, if a man ſhould receive writings from his Emperour, he would not reſt, he would not be quiet, he would give no ſleepe to his eyes, unleſſe he had firſt knowne what that earthly Emperour had written to him. The Emperour of Heaven, the Lord of men and Angels, hath ſent his Letters to thee, concerning thy life; and yet (my vaine-glorious ſonne) thou doeſt neglect earneſtly to reade thoſe Letters. Studie them therefore, I pray thee, and dayly meditate upon the words of thy Creator: Learne the minde of God in the Word of God, that thou mayeſt aſpire more earneſtly to eternall things, and that your minde may with greater deſire be inflamed to the heavenly Kingdome.*

Thirdly, [b] *Origen* teacheth, *That the people ſhould learne the Scriptures without booke.*

Fourthly, [c] *Ierome* counſelleth, *That by dayly reading the Scriptures, wee ſhould get wiſedome:* His words import ſo much.

Fifthly, *Read the Scriptures* (ſaith [d] *Auſtin*) *for that they were written to the end we ſhould be comforted.*

Sixtly, [e] *Ierome* writing to *Gaudentius* about the education of a yong maid, would have her at ſeven yeeres old, and when ſhe begins to bluſh, to learne without book the *Pſalter*; and until ſhe come to be marriageable, to make the treaſure of her heart the Books of *Salomon*, the *Goſpels*, *Apoſtles*, and *Prophets*.

[a] *Quid iſta Scriptura, niſi quædam Epiſtolæ omnipotentis Dei ad creaturã ſuã? & certè ſicubi eſſet gloriaveſtis alibi conſtituta, & ſcripta iam Imperatoris acciperet, non ceſſaret, non quieſceret, ſomnũ oculis non daret, niſi prius quid ſibi Imperator terrenus ſcripſiſſet agnoviſſit. Imperator Cæli, Dominus hominũ & Angelorũ, pro vita tuâ tibi ſuas Epiſtolas tranſmiſit, & tamen, glorioſe fili, eaſdem Epiſtolas ardenter legere negligis. Studе ergo queſo, & quotidiè Creatoris tui verba meditare. Diſce cor Dei in verbis Dei, ut ardentius ad æterna ſuſpires, ut mens veſtra ad cæleſtia regna maioribus deſideriis accendatur. Greg. tom. 2. Ep. lib. 4. c. 84. Col. 808.*

[b] *Hom. 4. in Lev.*

[c] *In Eccleſ. c. 10.*

[d] *In Pſal. 33.*

[e] *Diſcat memorit Pſalterium, & uſque ad annos pubertatis libros Salomonis, Evangelia, Apoſtolos, & Prophetas, ſui cordis theſaurum faciat. Hieron. par. 3. tract. 15. Ep. ad Gaudent.*

Obiect. 1.

Obiect. 1. But the Scriptures are hard to be underſtood, &c.

Anſw. Heare,

(1) *Chryſoſtome.* [f] *All things are cleare and plaine out of the holy Scriptures. Whatſoever things are neceſſarie, are manifeſt.*

(2) *Ierome.* [g] *The Lord hath ſpoken by his Goſpel, not that a few, but that all ſhould underſtand it. Plato wrote his writings, but not to the people, but to a few; ſcarce three underſtand him.*

(3) *Cyrill.* [h] *The Scriptures are profitably recommended unto us in an eaſie ſpeech, that they ſhould not goe beyond the capacitie of any.*

(4) Againe, *Chryſoſtome*, who having ſaid much for often reading, and plaineneſſe of the Scriptures, concludes: [i] *Who is there, to whom whatſoever is written in the Scriptures, is not manifeſt? Who is there, who hearing, that the meeke are bleſſed, the mercifull bleſſed, the pure in heart bleſſed, and the like, ſhall want a Maſter, that he ſhould learne any of thoſe things which are ſpoken?*

Obiect. 2. But I am intangled with varietie of buſineſſes, I have no leiſure to ſpend time in reading Scripture, as you adviſe: I am ſtill buſied in my Trade, Husbandry, Merchandiſe, in ſome high roome, &c. I have a great charge, Wife, children, and family to care for: Let Schollers, Miniſters, Gentle-folkes, &c. that have more time and leiſure, ply ſuch buſineſſes, for I cannot.

[f] Omnia clara ſunt & plana ex divinis Scripturis. Quæcunque neceſſaria ſunt, manifeſta ſunt. Πάντα σαφῆ καὶ εὐθέα τὰ περὶ ταῖς θείαις γραφαῖς· πάντα τὰ ἀναγκαῖα, δῆλα. *In* 2. *ad Theſſ. Hom.* 3.

[g] Dominus per Evangelia ſua locutus eſt, non ut pauci intelligerent, ſed ut omnes. Plato ſcripſit in Scripturâ, ſed non ſcripſit populis, ſed paucis vix enim intelliguntur tres homines. *In Pſal.* 86.

[h] *Contra Julian. lib.* 7. *medium circiter libri.*

[i] Cui enim non ſunt manifeſta, quæcunque in Evangelio ſcripta ſunt: Quis autem audiens, Beatos eſſe mites, beatos miſericordes, beatos mundi-cordes, cæteraque hujuſmodi, deſiderabit præceptorem, ut aliquid eorum diſcat, quæ dicuntur. *Tom.* 2. *de Lazaro, Conc.* 3. *pag.* 876. See abundantly for this purpoſe, in *Polan. Symphoniâ*, *pag.* 38. *&c.*

Anſw.

Anſw. Who are more buſied than Kings and Captaines? and yet they are commanded to be diligent readers of Gods Booke. See *Deut.*17.18, 19. *Ioſh.*1.8.

But *Chryſoſtome* makes this Objection, and anſwers it himſelfe excellently: [k] *What ſayeſt thou, Oh man? Is it not thy dutie to reade the Scriptures, becauſe thou art diſtracted with innumerable cares? Yea, it is thy dutie rather than others, &c.* In which Sermon alſo, he lets fall this confident aſſertion: * *Neither now can it be, it cannot be, I ſay, that any man ſhould attaine unto ſalvation, unleſſe he be continually converſant in ſpirituall reading.*

Object. 3. But, alas, I cannot reade.

Anſw. Heare then *Auſtin:*

[l] *Neither let this be ſufficient for you, that in the Church you doe heare divine reading; but alſo in your houſes, either doe you your ſelves reade, or get others that can reade, and doe you willingly hearken.*

And he ſtirres them up to it, with theſe conſiderations:

(1) [m] *Remember, Brethren,* (ſaith he) *the ſaying of our Lord, in which hee ſaith; If a man ſhall gaine the whole World, and loſe his owne ſoule, what will it profit him?*

(2) [n] *What remaineth and abideth in a man, but that which every one, either by reading, or praying, or doing good workes for the ſalvation of his ſoule, hath layd up in the treaſure of his Conſcience?*

[k] *Quid ais homo? Non eſt tui negotij Scripturas evolvere, quoniam innumeris curis diſtraheris? Imò tuum magis, eſt quàm illarum, &c.* De Lazaro, Tom.2. Conc.3. p.374.

* *Neque unquam fieri poteſt: non poteſt, inquam, fieri, ut quiſquam ſalutem aſſequatur, ni perpetuò verſetur in lectione ſpirituali.*

[l] *Nec ſolùm vobis ſufficiat, quòd in Eccleſiâ divinas lectiones auditis; ſed etiam in domibus veſtris aut ipſi legite, aut alios legentes requirite, & libenter audite.*

[m] (1) *Recolite, fratres, ſententiam Domini noſtri, quâ dicit; Si totum mundum lucretur homo, &c.*

[n] (1) *Quid autem permanet in homine, niſi quod quiſque aut legendo, aut orando, aut bona opera faciendo, pro animæ ſalute, in theſauro conſcientiæ ſuæ recondiderit.* De Tem. Serm.55. See Gregor. Moral. Dialog. lib.4. cap.14.

Object. 4. But will not publike reading in the House of God serve the turne?

Answ. By no meanes. Heare *Chrysostome:*

° *Therefore often doe I tell you before-hand, many dayes before the argument of which I shall speake, that in the dayes in the meane while, taking a Booke, and weighing the whole summe of the matter, after yee have understood what hath beene said, and what remaines to be said, you may make your minde more fit to heare those things which afterward shall be declared; and that I alwayes exhort to, and will not cease to doe it, That you doe not onely attend here to those things which are spoken, but also when you shall be at home, you may dayly attend to the reading of holy Scriptures. Which thing I have not ceased to presse upon those who privately have talked with me.*

Object. 5. But from this libertie of reading Scriptures, spring many Heresies.

Answ. P The sacred Scripture is not the cause of Heresies, but the ignorance of the holy Scripture. Heare *Chrysostome:*

¶ *Hence arose so many thousand evils, from the ignorance of holy Writ: Hence sprung up so great a plague of Heresies.*

r Godly Bookes also, with which this Age is abundantly and plentifully enriched, must be diligently and profitably read.

° *Eoque crebrò vobis prædicimus multis ante diebus argumentum de quo sumus loquuturi, ut his in medio diebus, sumpto libro, perpensaque rei summâ totâ, posteaquam intellexeritis, quid dictum sit, quid restet dicendum, mentem vestram instructiorem reddatis ad audienda quæ post disserentur. Idque semper hortor, & hortari non desinam, ut non hic tantùm attendatis ijs quæ dicuntur, verum etiam cum domi fueritis, assiduè divinarum Scripturarum lectioni vacetis. Quod quidem & ijs, qui privatim mecum congressi sunt, non destiti inculcare. Tom. 2. de Lazaro, Conc. 2. pag.* 874. See to this purpose in the Answer to the third Objection, a little before. P See *Pol. Symphon. pag.* 60. where he proves this Assertion. ¶ Ἐντεῦθεν τὰ μυρία ἐφύει κακά, ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν γραφῶν ἀγνοίας. Ἐντεῦθεν ἡ πολλὴ τῶν αἱρέσεων ἐβλάστησε λύμη. *Chrysost. in præfat. in Epist. ad Romanos.* r Of which, see *Rogers* seven Treatises, *pag.* 289. The Epistle Dedicatorie to the Practice of Christianitie.

3 Another

3 Another meanes by which the Word may dwell plentifully in us, is Conference. See *Deut.6.7. Luke* 24.19. That of *Austin* before, *pag.* 210. in the ſecond Reaſon of our ſeldome Preaching: That of *Chryſoſtome*, *Walking with God*, *pag.*248. *Rogers* ſeven Treatiſes, *pag.* 364. *&c.* my *walking with God*, *pag.* 86. *&c.* 3

4 A fourth meanes, is Meditation. Of which, ſee *Rogers* ſeven Treatiſes, *pag.*235. *&c.* 4

Matter of Meditation.

Wee may meditate upon any part of Gods Word, on God himſelfe, his Wiſedome, Power, his Mercie; or on the infinite varietie of good things, which wee receive of his free bountie; upon his workes, and judgements; upon our ſinnes, and the vileneſſe of our corruption, that wee yet carry about us; upon our mortalitie, and changes in this World; upon our manifold afflictions of this life, and how wee may in beſt manner beare and goe through them, and the benefit thereof; upon the manifold and great priviledges which wee enjoy dayly, through the ineſtimable kindneſſe of God towards us; upon the foure laſt things, but eſpecially of thoſe things that wee have moſt ſpeciall need of. See Practice of Chriſtianitie, *p.*289. *&c.*

Of the thing meditated upon, conſider,

Firſt, The definition, or deſcription.

Secondly, The diſtribution, ſorts, kinds, or parts.

Thirdly, Cauſes eſpecially efficient, and finall.

Fourthly, The fruits and effects which it bringeth forth.

Fifthly, The ſubject wherein it is, or about which it is occupied.

Sixtly, The qualities or properties adjoyned. And know, that oftentimes, in common practice, theſe three, the finall cauſe, the fruit or the effect, the uſe or propertie of a thing, are often confounded.

Seventhly, The contrarie.

Eightly, The compariſon.

Exemplifie in the joyes of Heaven; of which, ſee *Hall*: In ſinne; of which, ſee *Practice of Chriſtianitie, pag.* 293. Vpon this occaſion, let us peruſe, in this manner, Faſting, and the Plague.

5 5 A fifth meanes to profit by the Word, is Teaching, Praying with, and Catechizing your children and ſervants.

To which Dutie, be ſtirred up and ſtrengthened, by

Firſt, Scriptures; *Deut.* 4. 9. & 6. 7. & 11. 19. *Pſal.* 78. 5, 6. *Exod.* 12. 26, 27. & 13, 14. *Ioſh.* 4. 6, 7, 21, 22. *Deut.* 6. 20, 21. *Eph.* 6. 4.

Secondly, By the patterne and practice of holy Parents, from time to time. Conſider for this purpoſe, the carriage of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 19. *David*, *Prov.* 4. 4. *Bathſheba*, *Prov.* 31. 1. *Lois* and *Eunice*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5.

Thirdly, By the authoritie of the ancient Fathers.

(1) Heare *Auſtin.*

[a] *Notwithſtanding, my deare friends, in ſo great a difference of manners, and ſuch abominable corruption, governe your Houſes, governe your Children, governe your Families: As it behoves us to ſpeake to you in the Church, ſo it pertaines to you to doe in your Houſes; that yee may be able to give a good account of thoſe who are under you.* Againe; [b] *I pray thee, my Brother, I pray thee, ſhew to all under thee, of meere good will, from the leaſt to the greateſt in thy Houſe, the love and ſweetneſſe of Heaven, the bitterneſſe and feare of Hell; and be thou ſolicitous and watchfull, becauſe thou ſhalt render an account to the Lord for all thoſe under thee, that are in thy Houſe. Declare, charge, command, perſwade them, that they would take heed of Pride, of Slandering, of Drunkenneſſe, of Fornication, of Luxurie, Anger, Perjurie, Covetouſneſſe, which is the root of all evill.*

(2) *Nazianzen.* [c] *Haſt thou a Child? Let not wickedneſſe take advantage and occaſion: Let it be endued with ſanctitie, and conſecrated to thy ſpirit from the very Cradle.*

I know he meanes it immediately of Baptiſme: but by Analogie, that binds alſo to have a care of religious education.

[a] *Veruntamen, chariſſimi, in tantâ morum diverſitate & tam deteſtabili corruptelâ, regite domos veſtras, regite filios veſtros, regite familias veſtras. Quomodo ad nos pertinet in Eccleſiâ loqui vobis: Sic ad vos pertinet in domibus veſtris agere, ut bonam rationem reddatis de his qui vobis ſunt ſubditi. In Pſal. 50. pag. 596.*

[b] *Quæſo, mi frater, quæſo, omnibus tibi ſubjectis, & bonæ voluntatis, in domo tuâ à maiore uſque ad minimum, amorem & dulcedinem regni Cœleſtis, amaritudinem & timorem Gehennæ annuncies, & de eorum ſalute ſolicitus & pervigil exiſtas, quia pro omnibus tibi ſubjectis qui in domo tuâ ſunt, rationem Domino reddes. Annuncia, præcipe, impera, ſuade ijs ut caveant ſe à Superbiâ, à Detractione, ab Ebrietate, à Fornicatione, à Luxuriâ, ab Irâ, à Perjurio, à Cupiditate, quæ eſt radix omnium malorum. Lib. de Salutar. Documentis, pag. 541.* [c] *Infans tibi eſt? Ne anſam & occaſionem arripiat improbitas: ab infantia ſanctitate imbuatur, ab ipſis unguiculis Spiritui conſecretur. Orat. 40. in S. Bapt.*

Fourthly, by Reaſons.

Reaſon 1. From the end of their being.

Firſt, Thy Children ſprung from thy Loines, and came into the World, to encreaſe the number of Gods people, to learne the way to Heaven, and walke in it; not onely to uphold thy Houſe, inherite thy Poſſeſſions, and convey thy Name to future Generations. The glorifying of our God, ſerving our Brethren in love, ſalvation of our owne Soules, are the chiefe ends why we live a little while in this World. Now Parents ſhould be moſt ſolicitous to further their Children, for the attainement of the maine end, and moſt ſoveraigne good.

Reaſon 2. Neceſſitie.

Secondly, Neglect of this Dutie, makes Parents worſe to their Children, than to their Beaſts: For,

1 They provide for their Beaſts all things neceſſarie for them; but in their owne deare Children, they neglect that *One neceſſarie thing*.

2 They procure for, and put their Beaſts to all things of which they are capable. Their Children are capable of Grace, and Immortalitie; and they never meddle, nor move them to looke that way, or lay hold upon eternall Life.

Reaſon 3. Example of *Eli*.

Thirdly, Let the remarkable and ruſull example of *Eli*, be for ever a keene ſpurre in the ſides of ſlouthfull Parents, to quicken them to this Dutie.

Reaſon 4. Equitie.

Fourthly, Thou art farre more cruell than the Oſtrich and the Dragon, and mayeſt be ſaid to have ſuckt the breſts of Tygres, and to be hewed out of the hardeſt Rocke; if having brought thy Children

Children forth into this World, limbes for the Devill, and fewell for Hell-fire, thou labour not might and maine, to get them new-borne the members of Chriſt, and freed from everlaſting flames.

Fifthly, Grace onely is able to make thy Children truly obedient, ſerviceable, and everlaſtingly thankfull; having now a double tye; firſt, birth; ſecondly, new-birth. Then onely, and never before, doe they begin to pray for their Parents, to deale faithfully in their buſineſſes, not to long for their death. *Reaſon 5.* Profit.

Sixtly, A conſcionable and conſtant performance of this Dutie in their life time, will fill Parents hearts full of ſweeteſt joy and heavenly comfort upon their Beds of Death; when they ſee, by their care and zeale for their ſpirituall good, that holy knowledge and wiſedome planted in their Childrens hearts, which will bring them after them to eternall bliſſe: or howſoever, conſciouſneſſe of a conſcionable diſcharge of their Dutie in this reſpect, will infinitely refreſh them. *Reaſon 6.* Comfort.

Seventhly, It is the way to make thy poſteritie truly honourable, and to meet thee in Heaven. Thoſe Children which are taught by thee, may teach the ſame things unto theirs, and thoſe to others, &c. *Reaſon 7.* Honour.

Eightly, Thy Children neglected in this point, and ſo dying impenitently, will curſe thee everlaſtingly in Hell, for thy bloudie inexpiable crueltie towards them in this kind. *Reaſon 8.* Hurt.

Reaſ. 9.

Ninthly, Beſides innumerable ſinnes of thine owne, (the leaſt of which, merits eternitie of Helliſh torments) thou haſt juſtly * ſet upon thy Score, by this unconſcionable murthering negligence, the ſinnes and ſinnefull courſes of thine owne Children; which will lye full heavie upon thy Conſcience, when it ſhall be ragingly enlightened by the long provoked wrath of God.

* *Sed plerique hominum hæc non reminiſcuntur, qui filios ſuos ab infantiâ exterminant; qui filios ſuos & filias ſuas ab incunabulis non erudiunt, non corripiunt à iuventute; non prohibent mala, non odiunt peſſima, non coercent illicita, non admovent timorem Dei, non comminantur iudicium Gehennæ, non vitæ æternæ introitum docent; non enim educunt eos in diſciplina, atque eruditione Domini, quia non egerunt curam pro animabus eorum, neque ſolliciti ſunt pro ſalute, vel perditione filiorum. Huiuſmodi cum non erudiunt neque corripiunt filios ſuos, & ipſorum animam igni inextinguibili in introitum tradunt, & ſemet ipſos in furorem iudicij demergunt; omnia enim quæ deliquerint filij, de parentibus requiruntur, qui non erudierint, neque corripuerint filios ſuos. Huius evidens exemplum in Heli oſtenditur, & in filijs eius, atque in alijs alibi. Origen. in lib. Job. 1.*

6 6 The next meanes, is Prayer, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5.

7 7 The ſeventh meanes, is Practiſe. See *Iohn* 7. 17.

8 8 The eight, is Experience. See *Dike* of the heart, *pag.* 69.

3 3 Be none of the reprobate grounds, *Math.* 13. of which, ſee *Dike, Taylor.*

4 4 Be none of thoſe, who invited to the Marriage of the Kings Sonne, *Math.* 22. either, firſt, wilfully contemne, *Verſ.* 3. ſecondly, or careleſly diſ-eſteeme, *Verſ.* 5. thirdly, or cruelly perſecute, *Verſ.* 6.

See *Muſculus* and others upon the place.

5 5 Reject all thoſe Helliſh temptations, which doe mightily keepe off the dint and power of the

the moſt piercing Word; and being entertained, will cauſe the Word preached to be but as the breath of the Miniſter ſcattered in the Ayre, and as Water ſpilt upon the Ground, which cannot bee gathered up againe. They are like thoſe ſtrong Holds of Sathan, mentioned 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. which being ſet up in any heart, will blunt the edge of this ſpirituall weapon, that it will doe no good. They be theſe that follow.

1 In the firſt place, and higheſt ſtraine of impietie, the depth of our corrupt nature deſireth, That there were no God: *The foole hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God, Pſal.* 14. 1. That is, hee labours for a reſolution, and perſwaſion in his owne heart, That there is no Tribunall in Heaven, before which hee ſhall hereafter be arraigned; no Treaſurie of Plagues, and Woes in Hell, with which he ſhall hereafter be everlaſtingly fettered and enchained. 1

2 But if it ſo be, this ſpirituall foole cannot ſo aboliſh and extinguiſh thoſe ſecret notions and apprehenſions of a ſacred and infinite Deitie, which are naturally implanted in the bowels of the moſt deſperate and damned miſcreant; but that the terrors of the laſt Iudgement, and plagues of Hell, doe eftſoones vexe and bite his Conſcience with reſtleſſe remorſe and ſtingings: Why then, in a ſecond place, that hee may procure ſome eaſe and quiet to his wallowing in ſenſuall pleaſures, hee labours might and maine to harden his for-head againſt Heaven, 2

to

to make his heart like the nether-Milſtone, with his owne Soule-murthering hand to put a hot Iron to his Conſcience; that ſo, if hee cannot blunder and blot out of his minde thoſe naturall impreſſions of a God-head, yet at the leaſt hee may extinguiſh and baniſh out of his heart all feare of that God, of his Iudgement-Seat, and vengeance againſt ſinne: That ſo hee may ruſh like a wilde Horſe into the Battaile, furiouſly and deſperately upon all villanies and vanities, without all checke of Conſcience, and controlement, from the terrors of the Iudgement to come. In this deſperate and furious mood, he joynes himſelfe with theſe Gyants of Babel, *Iſa.*5. who outragiouſly reare up Towers of Treaſon and defiance againſt Heaven, and throw mountaines of pride and contempt one upon another, that they may climbe up to the Seat of God, and pull him out of his Throne, crying aloud towards Heaven; *Let him make ſpeed, let him haſten his worke, that wee may ſee it; and let the counſell of the holy One of Iſrael draw neere, and come, that wee may know it.*

3 3 If this will not be, and that he finde no ſucceſſe in ſetting himſelfe againſt Heaven, (*Who ever oppoſed himſelfe againſt God, and proſpered?*) but that hee is cruſhed and confounded with the majeſtie and terror thereof: Why then, in a third place, hee faſtens the fangs of his malicious and wrangling wit, and the furie of his prophane Atheiſme, upon his true and holy Word: And that,

First,

First, Either by entertaining or harbouring a reprobate and blaſphemous conceit, that the ſacred Word of God is but a politike invention, and device of State, to keepe men in order, and moderation; to maintaine Order and peaceableneſſe in Cities and Societies; and to preſerve the World, and mankinde, from wildneſſe and Barbariſme.

Secondly, Or by proportioning his carnall conceit of Gods pure and undefiled Law, to that which hee holds of the Decrees and Conſtitutions of men.

See my diſcourſe of true happineſſe, *pag.* 58.

And if it be either ſo, or ſo, it is well enough; hee can, in the meane time, therewith ſtill the cryes of his Conſcience, and ſtop the mouth of that Worme that never dies, that it gnaw not too eagerly, and fiercely, to the diſ-ſweetning of his carnall contentments, and the making of his ſenſuall pleaſures more unpleaſant.

Now, would it not vexe a man, to have the meat pulled out of his mouth, his chayne from his necke, his clothes from his backe, his limbes from his body, his right arme from his ſhoulder, his eyes out of his head? So it is with every unregenerate man, and ſuch is his torture, when that two-edged Sword, the Word of God, ſtrikes at his ſweet ſinne, and ſenſuall pleaſures: And therefore no marvell, though hee ſtrive and ſtruggle, ſhift and ſhield himſelfe, by any meanes. Nay, the Luſts of the unregenerate man, are his very life. For, as every godly man liveth a double life; one of Grace, by the ſanctifying power of the

the Spirit; another, of Nature: So every wicked man hath a double life; one, of Nature; and another, of corruption, by the curſed influence of Hell.

Nay, the ſenſuall delights of the ſinfull man are dearer unto him than his life. Hence it is, (as wee may obſerve by experience) that ſometimes a covetous man loſing the Life of his life, the Wedge of Gold, and Hoords of Wealth, makes an end of himſelfe. That the Wanton, becauſe hee is rejected, and diſcarded from the object of his luſtfull pleaſures, findes no pleaſure in life; but cuts off himſelfe, by a violent and untimely death. That *Ahitophel* being diſgraced, and over-topt in a point of Policie, (the crowne and pride of his worldly happineſſe) put his houſehold in order, and hanged himſelfe.

See *Burton* of Melancholy, *pag.* 214.

Nay, and yet further, the prophane man preferres the ſenſuall pleaſures of his heart, before the loſſe of his immortall Soule. For, how oft may wee ſee the honour of God, and everlaſting bleſſednеſſe, put as it were in the one Scale of the Ballance, and a little tranſitorie Pleaſure in the other? And in this caſe, the unſanctified man ſuffering one ſweet ſinne or other to weigh downe the exceeding weight of heavenly bliſſe, the unvaluable treaſure of a good Conſcience, the infinite glory of God, and the ſalvation of his owne deare Soule, in that great Day.

This groweth out of our corrupt nature: For wee have all, even in the beſt of us, the ſource and ſeeds of all ſinne. If the Lord ſhould leave and abandon

abandon us, to the full ſwing and ſway of our owne corruption, and not either bridle us by his reſtraining Spirit; or bleſſe us with his ſanctifying Spirit; wee might every one of us become as bad as *Iulian* the Apoſtata, who did maliciouſly abjure Chriſt; and as *Iudas*, who did perfidiouſly betray him. Naturally wee would wallow in ſinne, without checke of Conſcience, or controlment by the terror of the Iudgement to come.

4 But if hee cannot arme himſelfe againſt the terrors of God, and truth of his Word; but that he muſt needs acknowledge the one, and beleeve the other: Why then, in a fourth place, with much ſpight and malice, he flyes in the face of Gods Miniſters, Embaſſadours, which are his tormentors before his time: And that, 4

Firſt, Either againſt his Preaching, or againſt his Perſon: as, too obſcure, or too plaine; too cold, or too boiſterous; too particular, too perſonall, too preciſe, too imperious; too tart, and terrible; too full of Iudgement; tending to Sedition, againſt the State, or the like. And therefore he labours, not onely with his owne heart, to breed within himſelfe a diſtaſte and diſconceit of it; but alſo puts to his helping hand, to ſtay and ſtop the free courſe and current of it from others. He cannot abide to have his ſweet ſinne ſtrucke at ſtill, and ſtill to have his Conſcience grated upon, by the Miniſterie of the Word; and therefore he does what he can, to abandon and aboliſh it. When *Ieremies* Sermon, denouncing

cing Gods Iudgement againſt Iudah and Iſrael, were brought unto the King, *Ier.*36. 23. *Iehudi had not read paſt three or foure ſides before him, but the King ſtamped and raged, hee preſently tooke the Roule, and cut it with a Pen-knife, and caſt it into the fire that was on the Hearth, untill all the Roule was conſumed in the fire, that was on the Hearth.* In the 38. of *Ieremie*, when the Princes and Courtiers were nettled and ſtung with the downe-right dealing and holy ſeveritie of *Ieremies* Preaching; they preſently ranne unto the King, and traduced the bleſſed Prophet, to be a tranſgreſſor of Policie, and an enemie to the State. *Therefore the Princes ſaid unto the King: Wee beſeech you, let this man be put to death; for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of Warre that remaine in this Citie, and the hands of all the people, in ſpeaking ſuch words unto them: For this man ſeeketh not the wealth of this people, but the hurt.* And there you ſee what was the iſſue.

Thus Prophaneneſſe and Policie doth ever interprete the Doctrine of Life, and powerfull application of the Word, to be the Source and Seeds of Faction and Sedition; to be incompatible with the civill State, and the very cutthroat of Kingdomes and States imperiall. *Paul*, as wee may ſee in the 24. of the *Acts*, for his upright dealing, was nick-named a *Seditioner*, and a *troubler of the State. Certainely* (ſaith *Tertullus*) *wee have found this man a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of Sedition among all the Ieues throughout the World, and a chiefe maintainer of the Sect of the Nazarites.*

Thus

Thus the Word of Life, and newes of ſalvation from Heaven, is many times charged with Novelty, Sedition, and Hereſie. But that which by the conſtruction of carnall conceits, may be tearmed Hereſie, Factious, and Preciſe, is the very right way to Heaven. *I confeſſe* (ſaith *Paul*) *that after the way* (*which they call Hereſie*) *ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers, &c.* So may many good Chriſtians, and godly Miniſters, ſay in theſe Times to the men of this World; After the way, which you call Preciſeneſſe, Singularitie, and Faction, doe wee truly ſerve the living God, and ſave our ſouſes.

Secondly, Or if the authoritie and power of his Preaching doth ſo aſtoniſh and confound him, that hee hath no heart to meddle that way, or oppoſe againſt it; yet at leaſt, rather than not be malicious, hee will diſcharge his furie againſt his perſon.

Hence it is, that a faithfull and conſcionable Miniſter commonly, whereſoever hee lives, is an eminent marke whereat Prophaneneſſe and Policie, Malice and Crueltie, Hell and the World, diſcharge the utmoſt of their rage and poyſon. Hee above all others, is ſure to be wrongfully loaden with ſlanders, diſgraces, lying imputations, and all manner of foule indignities; and many times by the baſer ſort, which is more intolerable. If hee be but halfe ſo honeſtly careſull, in providing for his family, as the carnall worldling is curſedly carking, hee is covetous: If powerfull in his Preaching, hee is imperious:

If

If hee oppoſe againſt the ſinnes of the Time, hee is factious: If hee be faithfull in his Miniſterie, hee is too preciſe, and plaine: If hee comes home to mens Conſciences, hee is too particular, and undiſcreet. In a word, if hee were *Paul*, hee ſhould be *a peſtilent fellow*; if CHRIST IESVS, bleſſed for ever (a horrible thing!) hee ſhould be *Belzebub*: For ſo that glorious Lord, and bleſſed Servant, was nick-named and branded by the prophane World.

Hence it is, that the generation of the prophane and wicked Crue doe ever furiouſly band themſelves together, to tranſplant and root out a conſcionable Miniſter, whenſoever God brings him amongſt them. Like an unquiet and raging Sea, they continually foame out ſpightfull ſpeeches, filthie and ſhamefull ſlanders, and *lay things unto his charge, hee never knew*: That ſo, by diſcouraging him in his Miniſterie, weakening his hands, and breaking his heart, they may any wayes be rid of him: Or elſe, by picking unneceſſarie Quarrels againſt him, they labour by Authoritie, and ſtrong hand, to throw him out of his place. For their malice againſt a powerfull Miniſter, is endleſſe, and implacable.

It is ever the propertie of un-ingenuous prophaneneſſe, to hate and feare a faithfull and conſcionable Preacher as ill as the Plague, and ſo to eſteeme of him. This appeares, by *Tertullus* cenſure of *Paul*; *Certainely* (ſaith hee) *wee have found this man a peſtilent fellow*: When indeed

deed himſelfe was a pernicious Orator, and abuſed his curſed Eloquence, to the confuſion of Goodneſſe. In the Originall, the word ſignifies, *the Plague.* The *Plague*, that great affrighter, and terror of the ſonnes of men, is not halfe ſo terrible and vexing, as is that man to a carnall heart, which preaches *with power and authoritie*, *and not as the Scribes* and formall Doctors; and no marvell. The Plague threatens but onely the feares and pangs of a temporall death, and takes but away the naturall Life; but the powerfull Word, from the mouth of a conſcionable Miniſter, doth ſtrike to the very heart of a carnall man, the terrors of Hell-fire and everlaſting Vengeance, and doth labour to bereave him of his Life of Corruption, and Pleaſures; which, as I told you before, is more ſweet and deare unto him, than his Life of Nature.

Εὑρέντες γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον λοιμόν.

And hereupon it is, that as you ſee Townes and Cities buſily beſtirre themſelves, watch and ward, diligently enquire, and examine paſſengers, to keepe out the Plague; ſo it is the policie and practice of thoſe places, where Drunkards, Swaggerers, Worldlings, and prophane men ſwarme, joyntly to conſpire and band together, for the baniſhing of godly Miniſters, and driving them out of their Coaſt. CHRIST IESVS himſelfe, *who ſpake as never any man ſpake*, was ſo uſed by the Swiniſh Gadarens; as you may reade in the fifth of *Luke*. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, that glorious paire of worthy Paſtors, were ſo uſed by the rebellious and ſtiffe-necked Iewes, *Act.* 13. whereupon

they told them to their faces, That thereby they judged themſelves unworthie of everlaſting life. *Then Paul and Barnabas* (ſaith the Text) *ſpake boldly, and ſaid, It was neceſſarie, that the Word of God ſhould have firſt beene ſpoken unto you: But ſeeing you put it from you, and judge your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, loe wee turne unto the Gentiles.* The Booke of God, Eccleſiaſticall Stories, experience of our Times, doe plentifully verifie and confirme this Point.

5 5 But if ſo be, this Spirituall Foole, whom wee have carried along through ſo many ſteps of impietie, cannot have his will againſt the Preaching and the Perſon of the Miniſter; but that he ſees the Power of the Word, which he cannot decline, is like continually to vexe him, to ſtrike through his loynes, with feare and trembling ſtill to grate upon his Conſcience for his ſweet ſinne, to diſcerne and diſcover the very thoughts and imaginations of his heart; or that hee is more ingenuous and faire-conditioned than other unregenerate men (for ſometimes ſweetneſſe and lovingneſſe of naturall diſpoſition doth bridle men from raging againſt the power of holy Doctrine, and ſinceritie of an honeſt man:) Why then, in a fifth place, hee

Firſt, Either reſolves (as many doe) to give the Preacher hearing indeed, and perhaps reverent attention too; but with this ſecret reſervation, That hee ſhall not ſtirre and move him with all his Preaching; That ſay what hee will, hee ſhall never perſwade him, that this or that ſinne

is

is ſo hainous as hee makes it; hee ſhall never drive him from the Faſhions of the Times, and Cuſtomes of his Fore-fathers; hee ſhall never bring him out of conceit with good-fellowſhip. So, that as the deafe Adder ſtoppeth his eares againſt the Enchanter, charme hee never ſo wiſely; ſo ſhuts hee the eares of his heart againſt the Word of Life: and though it ſounds dayly lowd and ſtrongly in his eares, yet will he by no meanes ſuffer it to ſinke feelingly and powerfully into his ſoule. Thoſe men which reſt upon this ſtep of impietie, and in this degree of prophaneneſſe, though they heare Sermon upon Sermon, yet are they ſtill the ſame men: They are Lyers ſtill, they are Drunkards ſtill, they are Vſurers ſtill, they are Swearers ſtill, they are luke-warme Profeſſors ſtill, &c. they are ſtill as they were. Though theſe ſinnes have againe and againe been cryed againſt, and many times reproved, and their Conſciences convinced; yet the Word which is preached amongſt them, hath no more power, nor wrought more alteration upon them, than upon the Seats where they ſit: Though the glorious Light of the Goſpel ſhine faire and bright upon them, yet they lye ſtill hard frozen in their dregs, and ſtarke blinde in matters of Heaven: Though the Hammer of the Word beat often upon their hearts, yet it doth not breake and bruiſe them, but more and more harden and emmarble them, like an Anvill and Adamant: Though they be waſhed with many plentifull Showers from Heaven, yet they ſtill continue

blacke Moores, and Leopards; ſtill full of the blackneſſe of Hell, and ſpots and pollution of Sathan.

Let thoſe that are ſuch among you, in the Name of God beware in time: for aſſuredly, the Damnation ſleepeth not, the Day of Reckoning and every mans particular Iudgement is very neere; and then we muſt be anſwerable and countable for every Sermon wee have heard: Every Sermon will then ſtand up, either to witneſſe for us, or againſt us; for every one wee heare, either advanceth us a ſtep neerer towards Heaven, or throwes us a ſtayre lower downe towards Hell.

Secondly, Or if hee cannot ſo fence himſelfe againſt the keene edge of the Word, that two-edged Sword, which day after day is layd to the root of his corruption; nor ſo hide his head from the heat of that glorious and ſacred Sunne of Truth, which every Sabbath ſhines on his face; but that the ſharpe Arrowes of the Word of Truth and Righteouſneſſe doe pierce his heart, and Sword of Spirit gets ſo farre within him, that it ſtrikes and aſtoniſheth his Conſcience: Why then hee,

Firſt, Either ſtrives and ſtruggles againſt it, by ſhifting and ſhielding himſelfe with Diſtinctions, Exceptions, Excuſes, carnall Reaſons, Reſtrictions, Limitations, falſe Gloſſes, private and partiall Interpretations, and oppoſing one place of Scripture, in his owne falſe and enforced Senſe, againſt the true meaning and naturall power of the

the Word in another place, as I have told you largely before. So wretchedly and unhappily is hee wedded to the ſinfull pleaſures of this vaine World, that hee will wreſt his wit, the Word of God, or any thing, to wreſt out of his heart thoſe piercing Arrowes of the Word of Truth, ſhot by the hand of a skilfull Archer; which if he would ſuffer to ſearch and ſinke, would fetch out the poyſon of his naturall corruption, mortifie his luſt, and ſave his ſoule.

Secondly, Or if hee have not wit and underſtanding to furniſh himſelfe fitly with probable Interpretations, formall Diſtinctions, and plauſible Exceptions, (for this abilitie onely befalls prophane men of better parts, and more underſtanding:) Why then, being reſolved not to ſubmit to the power of the Word, nor to forſake his carnall contentments, hee takes this courſe; hee ſurfets ſo immoderately, and drinkes ſo deepe of ſenſuall pleaſures of that boſome-ſinne to which hee is ſo much wedded, that hee caſts his Conſcience aſleepe, drownes his heart in earthly delights, and ſo goes on at all adventures, and throwes himſelfe upon Gods mercies, without all ground or warrant, with ſuch conceits as theſe: That hee hopes hee ſhall doe as well as others, who are farre worſe and more wicked than himſelfe: That God, no doubt, will be merciſull to one ſinne: That all his other good parts and good deedes will countervaile and make amends for one infirmitie, (for ſo hee will call it, and conceive of it, though it be a groſſe and grievous

ſinne:) That one ſinne will not require ſo great repentance, but that it may be well enough done on his death-bed, and ſuch like.

Thus I have acquainted you by the way, with the ſteps of impietie, and degrees of prophaneneſſe, wherein unregenerate men, which hate to be reformed, and refuſe to yeeld up themſelves to bee maſtered and guided by the Power and Light of the holy and heavenly Word of the true and ever-living God, doe unhappily reſt and repoſe themſelves, to the eternall confuſion both of their ſoules and of their bodies: Which you muſt take heed of, if you would profit by the Word.

6 6. Diſcover and defeat all thoſe Snares of Sathan, that wee have formerly mentioned to you in this Diſcourſe, *pag.* 83. under the fourth Vſe.

7 7 Deject and demoliſh thoſe two ſtrong Holds of Sathan; firſt, Carnall Reaſon; ſecondly, Corrupt Affection; which I thus define: It is the actuated ſtrength and rage of originall pollution, which furiouſly executes the ſenſuall and unreaſonable determinations of corrupted Carnall Reaſon; ſtands at open defiance, and profeſſes open hoſtilitie againſt Grace, goodneſſe, and good men, and courſes of ſanctification; feedes upon ſo long, and fills it ſelfe ſo full with worldly vanities and pleaſures, that growing by little and little incorrigible and untameable, it breedes and brings forth, as it naturall iſſue, Deſpaire, Horror, and the Worme which never dies.

By

By Carnall Reason, I understand the whole speculative power of the higher and nobler part of the Soule, which wee call the Vnderstanding, as it is naturally and originally corrupted, and utterly destitute of all Divine Light; and doth afterward, through it owne sinfull working and sensuall discourse, grow wise in the World and earthie affaires, but disconceitfull and opposite to the wayes of God, and heavenly wisedome, by concluding and commending to it selfe false Principles, from deluded sence, and deducing false conclusions from true Principles, and by a continued exercise and experience in contemplation of Earth, and passages of worldly Policie.

8 By Corrupt Affection, I meane and comprise all the active inferior powers of the Soule, Will, Affections, Sence, as they are polluted and empoysoned in the puddle of originall corruption; and afterward being fleshed in sensuall pleasures, and enfierced by Sathans suggestions, become the furious executioners of all the sinfull decrees and unsanctified determinations of the mis-guided understanding and wisedome of the flesh.

8 In hearing the Word, be sure,

First, [a] *To give earnest heed, Heb.* 2. 1.

Secondly, [b] *To consider seriously,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 7.

Thirdly, [c] That wee be not in this respect like leaking Vessels, and have Sieve-like memories, *Heb.* 2. 1.

Fourthly, [d] To keepe the Word with much adoe, with great contention and colluctation, *Luke* 8. 15.

[a] Προσέχειν. *Adhibere animum, advertere animum.*

[b] Νοεῖν. *Mente agitare, in animo versare.*

[c] Μέποτε παραῤῥυῶμεν. *Nequando perfluamus, ut Terentianus ille Parmeno, se plenum esse rimarũ dicit, qui huc & illuc perfluat.*

[d] Κατέχειν. *Notanda est vis huius vocabuli, quo significatur, non sine magno certamine posse istud bonum semen asservari, luctante carne, ac Diabolo adversus spiritũ Dei, novum hospitem, & capitalem ipsorum inimicũ.*

9 Suffer the Spirit of Bondage to have its worke upon thee. Conclude horror upon thy heart, by the working of the Law, from such places as these; *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. 2 *Thess.* 1. 8, 9. *Rev.* 21. 8.

9 See *Perkins*, *Vol.* 1. *p.* 455.

10 When thy Conscience is once throughly wounded by the preparative worke of the Spirit of Bondage, and all thy sinnes, even those in which thou hast taken greatest delight, become heavie and a grievous burthen upon thy heart; then let that heavie heart of thine receive spirituall warmth, refreshing, and life,

10

First, By perusing the Lord Iesus in all the passages of his Love, Sufferings, and Satisfactions, from his comming from the Bosome of his Father, untill his returning unto his right hand againe; especially hanging upon him, bleeding and dying, and crying under the burthen of our sinnes, *My God, my God, &c.* and so conquering and concluding, *It is finished.*

Joh. 19. 30.

Secondly, By a feeling survey and sure setling upon all the Promises of Life, sealed with his righteous bloud.

See *Marrow of the Oracles of God*, *p.* 128, *&c.*

Thirdly, By cleaving to Gods sweetest Name, which is to forgive iniquitie, transgression, and sinne, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7.

See *Ibid. p.* 376, *&c.*

Fourthly, By resting with all thankefull and joyfull acknowledgement, and rejecting resolutely all scrupulous and fearefull injections, upon that blessed Mysterie of Gods free grace, which reacheth from everlasting to everlasting.

See *Randalls Cygn. Cant. p.* 28. *My Walking with God*, *p.* 10.

11 Then

11 Then ever after walke watchfully and fruitfully in the path which is called holy. 11

Now for continuall growing and profiting by the Miniſterie, in that new and bleſſed courſe, and for thriving by the food of the Word which thou enjoyeſt, take theſe directions, looke unto theſe things.

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FINIS.

ſinne:) That one ſinne will not require ſo great repentance, but that it may be well enough done on his death-bed, and ſuch like.

Thus I have acquainted you by the way, with the ſteps of impietie, and degrees of prophaneneſſe, wherein unregenerate men, which hate to be reformed, and refuſe to yeeld up themſelves to bee maſtered and guided by the Power and Light of the holy and heavenly Word of the true and ever-living God, doe unhappily reſt and repoſe themſelves, to the eternall confuſion both of their ſoules and of their bodies: Which you muſt take heed of, if you would profit by the Word.

6 6. Diſcover and defeat all thoſe Snares of Sathan, that wee have formerly mentioned to you in this Diſcourſe, *pag.* 83. under the fourth Vſe.

7 7 Deject and demoliſh thoſe two ſtrong Holds of Sathan; firſt, Carnall Reaſon; ſecondly, Corrupt Affection; which I thus define: It is the actuated ſtrength and rage of originall pollution, which furiouſly executes the ſenſuall and unreaſonable determinations of corrupted Carnall Reaſon; ſtands at open defiance, and profeſſes open hoſtilitie againſt Grace, goodneſſe, and good men, and courſes of ſanctification; feedes upon ſo long, and fills it ſelfe ſo full with worldly vanities and pleaſures, that growing by little and little incorrigible and untameable, it breedes and brings forth, as it naturall iſſue, Deſpaire, Horror, and the Worme which never dies.

By

By Carnall Reason, I understand the whole speculative power of the higher and nobler part of the Soule, which wee call the Vnderstanding, as it is naturally and originally corrupted, and utterly destitute of all Divine Light; and doth afterward, through it owne sinfull working and sensuall discourse, grow wise in the World and earthie affaires, but disconceitfull and opposite to the wayes of God, and heavenly wisedome, by concluding and commending to it selfe false Principles, from deluded sence, and deducing false conclusions from true Principles, and by a continued exercise and experience in contemplation of Earth, and passages of worldly Policie.

8

By Corrupt Affection, I meane and comprise all the active inferior powers of the Soule, Will, Affections, Sence, as they are polluted and empoysoned in the puddle of originall corruption; and afterward being fleshed in sensuall pleasures, and enfierced by Sathans suggestions, become the furious executioners of all the sinfull decrees and unsanctified determinations of the mis-guided understanding and wisedome of the flesh.

8 In hearing the Word, be sure,

First, [a] *To give earnest heed, Heb.* 2. 1.

Secondly, [b] *To consider seriously,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 7.

Thirdly, [c] That wee be not in this respect like leaking Vessels, and have Sieve-like memories, *Heb.* 2. 1.

Fourthly, [d] To keepe the Word with much adoe, with great contention and colluctation, *Luke* 8. 15.

[a] Προσέχειν. *Adhibere animum, advertere animum.*

[b] Νοεῖν. *Mente agitare, in animo versare.*

[c] Μέποτε παραῤῥυῶμεν. *Nequando perfluamus, ut Terentianus ille Parmeno, se plenum esse rimarũ dicit, qui huc & illuc perfluat.*

[d] Κατέχειν. *Notanda est vis huius vocabuli, quo significatur, non sine magno certamine posse istud bonum semen asservari, luctante carne, ac Diabolo adversus spiritũ Dei, novum hospitem, & capitalem ipsorum inimicũ.*

9 See *Perkins*, *Vol.1. p.455.*

9 Suffer the Spirit of Bondage to have its worke upon thee. Conclude horror upon thy heart, by the working of the Law, from ſuch places as theſe; *Deut.29.19,20. 2 Theſſ.1.8,9. Rev.21.8.*

10 10 When thy Conſcience is once throughly wounded by the preparative worke of the Spirit of Bondage, and all thy ſinnes, even thoſe in which thou haſt taken greateſt delight, become heavie and a grievous burthen upon thy heart; then let that heavie heart of thine receive ſpirituall warmth, refreſhing, and life,

First, By peruſing the Lord Ieſus in all the paſſages of his Love, Sufferings, and Satisfactions, from his comming from the Boſome of his Father, untill his returning unto his right hand againe; eſpecially hanging upon him, bleeding and dying, and crying under the burthen of our ſinnes, *My God, my God, &c.* and ſo conquering and concluding, *It is finiſhed.* *Joh.19.30.*

See *Marrow of the Oracles of God, p.228, &c.* Secondly, By a feeling ſurvey and ſure ſetling upon all the Promiſes of Life, ſealed with his righteous bloud.

See *Ibid. p.376, &c.* Thirdly, By cleaving to Gods ſweeteſt Name, which is to forgive iniquitie, tranſgreſſion, and ſinne, *Exod.34. 6,7.*

See *Randalls Cygn. Cant. p.28. My Walking with God, p.10.* Fourthly, By reſting with all thankefull and joyfull acknowledgement, and rejecting reſolutely all ſcrupulous and fearefull injections, upon that bleſſed Myſterie of Gods free grace, which reacheth from everlaſting to everlaſting.

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